

National Parent-Teacher

The P.T.A.



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Official Magazine of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

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- ★ To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church, and community.
- ★ To raise the standards of home life.
- ★ To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
- ★ To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child.
- ★ To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.



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An able Magazine chairman with a mind for success and a team that refused to be beaten turned in a record that put their P.T.A. at the top of the "Fifty or More" list in the *National Congress Bulletin*. Ninety-two room mothers of the Lewis and Clark P.T.A., Richland, Washington, went out to call on 450 families and came back with 330 subscriptions to the *National Parent-Teacher*. In the group shown here—drawing lots to see which room mother shall be photographed for the *Bulletin*—each person reported 100 per cent returns. Front row: Mrs. Wilson Kirk, Mrs. Paul Anderson, Mrs. John E. Irwin (Magazine chairman), Mrs. Charles McElroy, Mrs. Tim Crawford, and Mrs. A. L. Dowda. Back row: Mrs. Robert C. Mann, Mrs. C. L. Anderson, Mrs. E. C. Peddicord, Mrs. J. J. McCullough, Mrs. Harry Meloney (wife of the P.T.A. president), Mrs. Allen Ridley, Mrs. Charles L. Thomas, and Mrs. Jack Goodenow.

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The President's Message



THE ETERNAL PROMISE

THE resurgence of life with the coming of spring is a never failing miracle of hope. Not all the troubles of the world can keep it from us. Faith may falter when suffering prevails, and it is hard indeed to face today's problems without shrinking. Their immensity alone seems overwhelming, and the physical, mental, and spiritual anguish they involve for millions of our fellow creatures on this laboring earth must wring, from time to time, the stoutest heart. But faith in humanity grows by exercise. Only as we maintain it in ourselves and pass it on to others can it survive.

The task, however great, is not insuperable. Few tasks are. "The difficult can be done in a little while; the impossible may take a little longer." The thrilling history of man's upward march toward higher civilization shows that many a seeming impossibility becomes a fact accomplished. Faith can indeed move mountains, for a true definition of faith must include faith's endeavors. That faith is false which does not impel action. That action is fruitless which has no foundation in faith.

WE of the National Congress have seen too many miracles happen to abjure the faith that is in us. We are not to be shaken by the winds of doubt. We know in what and in whom we believe, and we are persuaded that the fatherhood of God cannot fail or the task of achieving the brotherhood of man be left unfinished. We know that our children, in whom the world's future lies latent, can be so taught and cherished as to become the pillars of society's better structure, and we believe in the intention and the ability of the home and the school so to teach them. We believe in the annual resurrection of promise and hope with the springtide, and we accept it as our duty and our privilege to pass on this faith to our children, our families, and our friends.

This year, as the flowers break forth in the jubilant beauty of Easter, we may well rededicate ourselves to the task. Faith and hope are contagious when they are real. It is within our power not only to transmit them by our words but to exemplify them in our lives. If we put from us all doubt and all fear of the future, cleanse our hearts of pettiness and our minds of prejudice, and go forward in our work with sure conviction, the world cannot help pausing to look and listen. The destiny of the democratic ideal throughout the world is, to no small extent, in the hands of parents and teachers. To fall short of that ideal is to cheat the world in which our children must live—and to cheat our children as well of all that makes life worth living.

Mabel H. Hughes

President, National Congress of Parents and Teachers



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This is the eighth article in the series "Psychology of the Preschool Child."

THE ROOTS OF AGGRESSION

AGGRESSION has become a sinister word in the minds of most people. It usually suggests a picture of a hostile, attacking, and disagreeable person or group, and the need to define defensive and restrictive measures is aroused. *Aggressive*, as applied to a person or a group, usually means troublesome and difficult. On the other hand, to describe a child or an adult as *unaggressive* usually implies a serious lack in that person's behavior. Such persons are generally thought of as timid and anxious because they make few outgoing moves.

These contradictory meanings and uses of the word result in a dilemma, since aggression is an elementary characteristic of all living matter. The capacity for aggression enables the organism to reach out and use its environment to satisfy the elemental needs of life and growth. In order to understand the dilemma it is essential to recapture part of the original meaning of the word. Aggression connotes life and action. The *Oxford Dictionary*, tracing the meaning and usage of the word, had to go back to the sixteenth century for this quotation: "Behold I watch him now aggress

and enter into his own." All subsequent quotations and present definitions stress the attacking and destructive meanings. Typical of this is Herbert Spencer's statement, "The Moral Law says—do not aggress."

Yet understanding aggressive behavior and its potential for good or evil is not merely an academic question involving definition of a word. Rather, it is a fundamental problem in human relationships, particularly in the parent-child relation. If the destructive concept of aggression prevails, efforts will be focused on repressing that quality in the child. But if the positive concept of aggression also has a place in the parents' attitudes, training can be directed toward preserving the constructive possibilities of this universally human characteristic.

The infant is born with an undifferentiated potential for aggression. In most descriptions of the essential characteristics of infancy, stress is laid on his dependence upon others, mainly the mother,

FREDERICK

H. ALLEN, M.D.

to satisfy his basic needs. But the normal infant is more than a passive receiver of the essentials of life, which the mother is ready to offer. When he takes the mother's breast and vigorously draws from it the food he needs, he is the initiator of an act that enables him to live. This is his first aggressive act, and it starts a process of organizing a life force that both satisfies his physiological needs and brings him into a new and significant relationship with a living power which is external to himself.

Aggression—Good, Bad, or Indifferent?

THE roots of aggression are in the very quality of aliveness, but the organization of this life force will be always in relation to the already organized aggression of significant individuals who have the responsibility of guiding the child in his growth.

The child's emerging capacity for positive or negative aggressive action can be understood as a vital process interacting between the child and the adult. Parents provide the child with a living framework within which to develop himself and discover how he can be aggressive. He can assert himself against the forms of behavior required, or he can yield and learn to use these standards to give meaning to his developing personality. His parents can make demands upon him and can yield to some of his demands upon them. They can stand steady before the "I will not" type of assertion, the demand of the child to grow in his own terms; or they can yield to these assertions.

Parents can become docile slaves to a child's demands; they can become autocrats seeking docile obedience. Others, representing as they do the reality to which the child is adjusting, become mediators and the means of assisting the child toward a positive relation to the world of which he is becoming

AGGRESSION in children is largely what parents make it. A natural impulse, aggression is in itself neither good nor bad but instinctive. It may be used either to build or to destroy. The wise parent will seek to understand its meaning and control, for it is one of the most vital forces in all human life.

ing a member. Aggression as the expression of the individual's vitality is translated into action, and later into feeling, in connection with day-to-day experiences.

Aggression can become heavily charged with destructive quality when the forces seeking to mold the child deny him the normal opportunity to grow into an individual different from those who created him. Habit training can become the means of stultifying the new member of society if it attempts to make him a mere repeater of the lives of others. All children assert themselves in varying degrees against the molding efforts of others. This is an essential reaction of the child. He needs to gain some feeling of power in himself and can yield in more friendly manner if his parents understand the value of this need, even though they hold steadily to what is necessary.

If the forces against which the child asserts himself are too rigid or if any aggressive action against parental control is regarded as a danger signal, the child either becomes passively submissive and unaggressive in action or develops an aggression heavily charged with hostility and attack. In both instances the healthy potential in aggression



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sive action is submerged, and the action may therefore progress into unhealthy and antisocial forms of behavior.

Aggression and Frustration

AGGRESSION cannot be discussed or understood without including some consideration of the equally important and as often misunderstood word *frustration*. Usually this word refers to a feeling that arises when any control imposed on an individual delays or blocks the drive to satisfy a need. A child meets reality within the boundaries of the family, which are defined by its other members. He learns early in life that he cannot always have what he wants when he demands it. Parents who believe it is wrong to frustrate a child and who respond to his every demand deny him the support and stimulus he needs to test out his slowly emerging capacities and find out what he can do to satisfy his own needs.

Some frustration is an essential part of growing up. But when these boundaries are narrowly and rigidly conceived and applied or when they melt away before the demands of the child, leaving him floundering with a control he cannot use constructively, then frustration renders the child's reactions null and void.

The basic birthright of every child is his right to become through his own experience a unique individual, different from those who created him. The more devastating frustrations underlying the

more devastating, destructively charged aggressions develop when the child is denied in various ways the support and direction he needs to achieve a sense of himself in the culture into which he is born. Providing that support represents the healthy aggression of the parent who is neither slave to the child nor an autocratic enforcer of his own will. Overpossessiveness toward a child, which protects him from all anxiety and holds him in the vise of parental care, is destructive in its frustrating effects. It is just as destructive as is the more autocratic, aggressive control by a parent who regards any show of aggressive action on the child's part as a threat to his own control. Paralyzing aggressive action in the early years, through either one of these errors, can result in a heavily charged neurotic pattern of behavior or else in open and unhealthy rebellion against controls the child needs but cannot use.

The Parent's Part

THE object of this brief statement is to restore the concept of aggression to its original meaning. Aggressiveness is characteristic of all living organisms; it is an essential human trait, with qualities that are neither good nor bad. It is an evidence of aliveness, and it enables the living organism to sustain life. It is a quality that never can develop in isolation but must always develop in relation to the aggression of others. That the word and the concept have acquired a sinister meaning is not accidental. This only demonstrates how frequently the conflict between big and little dominates the growth picture and charges the relation between parent and child with hostility, which in turn arouses more conflict.

Since the destructive aspects of aggression too frequently get the upper hand in both individual and group living, it is necessary that we gain a clearer understanding of the positive aspects of this human quality, which every parent has the opportunity and the responsibility to educate and preserve.

The common desire of all who have this responsible part in the growth process of the child is the strengthening of social conditions and attitudes that support the inherent strength rooted in the capacity for aggressive action. The child needs such help and direction if he is to utilize society's standards to give meaning to this capacity. The mature parent wants his child to develop the capacity "to aggress and find his place"—not just as an individual or as a faithful conformer to all the social forces but as the creator of the ever new social forces needed to sustain the virility of the human race.

See outline, questions, and reading references on page 36.



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Allowance FOR Growth



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MOST of us realize that sooner or later every child will be on his own. We also know that every child sooner or later must learn to make his own decisions in handling money. But we often do not recognize that the handling of money is a thing that has to be learned.

Our attitude toward the child and his money has undergone some interesting changes. In recent years money has been fairly plentiful. Jobs have been numerous, and pay has been rather good. There have been many opportunities for children to earn money by working after school and on Saturday. Family income also has been good, and we have been more liberal than usual in doling out money to children or increasing their allowances.

But the ability to use money must be acquired. No child is born with it. Furthermore, the learning is not a simple matter. It does not take place by itself, and it is a long process. Whether money is plentiful or scarce, there must be a definite plan to help the child learn. It isn't enough for the child to learn that five pennies make a nickel,

RALPH H. OJEMANN

*This is the eighth article in the series
"Psychology of the Elementary
School Child."*

two nickels a dime, ten dimes a dollar and so on. Money, as we all know, changes in value. The child may learn in his arithmetic class that a dollar equals one hundred cents, but when he reads the newspaper, listens to his parents or tunes in the radio he hears about a fifty-cent dollar or a thirty-eight cent dollar. Sooner or later he must learn how it happens that a dollar, which consists of one hundred cents can actually be worth only fifty cents or even thirty-eight cents as the case may be.

Another complication is that making decisions requires more than merely understanding the money system. It means that the child has to learn what choices will help him in the long run. Whether he will buy more hot dogs and popcorn than he needs to satisfy his hunger, or go without a new pair of socks or what we adults call "decent" shoes, depends greatly upon what he himself feels will help him most. It took us a long time to learn

TO MANY adults and to all children and adolescents, the handling of money is one of life's major problems. The very difficulty of solving it adequately has led to much neglect in the training of children. Yet children must be trained to spend and save wisely, and in this as in every other department of living they need wise and sympathetic guidance. Finding an adequate solution involves the whole family. It is no easy task, but it can be made rewarding for all concerned.

that some choices will help us more in the long run than others. It will also take the child some time to learn the same thing.

Firsthand Experience Means Growth

TRUE, the child can find out something about nickels and dimes if we explain their value to him. He can also learn something about helpful choices if we discuss his buying problems with him. But we ourselves didn't learn how to make good choices without actual practice. The child needs a chance for genuine practice too.

Learning the use of money is much like other kinds of learning. An adult can learn something about baking a cake, running a farm, or making a piece of furniture by reading about it, but he still must do most of his learning by trying his hand. The child is equally dependent on experience. In other words, all children need money of their own as an "allowance for growth."

The child may get his money either by earning it or by receiving it as an allowance. Or he may get it from both sources. The important point is that the money come in fairly regular amounts, especially at the start. Furthermore, *he* must do the managing. He must decide how the money is to be spent. It will not help him to form judgments and make decisions if someone tells him that he is to use ten cents for candy, ten cents for Sunday school, fifteen cents for a movie, and so on. The deciding has to be done by the child himself.

Also the things about which he makes these decisions must be things that he feels are real and important. For example, it won't help a twelve-year-old girl much to decide between a handkerchief and a scarf. The ordinary twelve-year-old has enough ability to learn to make logical decisions about most of her clothes, her school supplies, and similar items. She is old enough to learn to make wise decisions about the movies she sees or the books and magazines she buys.

Of course, there is a big difference between having the ability to learn and actually learning. The ordinary twelve-year-old has the ability to learn but unless there is an "allowance for growth" and a chance to form judgments this ability will be wasted.

A Rising Scale of Values

IT IS frequently suggested that under ordinary conditions a child five years old can learn enough about numbers and counting to have an allowance of ten cents a week, which can be gradually increased as he grows in ability. For example, the average child of seven can learn to take responsibility for buying some small article

of clothing, such as a belt, a handkerchief, or a scarf. He can also decide when he needs some new ones. It will help the child if he is made responsible for the purchase of some article that represents a real need, a need that he can understand. From this early beginning the responsibility for buying his clothes may be increased until he can manage an amount of money large enough to cover all his important clothing needs. This is within the range of high school students.

Or take the example of school supplies. Beginning with one or two articles, such as pencils and paper, the child's responsibility may be gradually increased until, by the time he is in the sixth grade, he should be able to buy all his school supplies.

It is important to remember that some adult guidance is always needed. But if we start early and help the child see what happens when he spends his money unwisely, he will gradually acquire a good sense of values.

Parents as Pilots

BUT how can we guide a child when he makes foolish purchases? Suppose he spends all his money for things he doesn't really need and doesn't get the handkerchief or the scarf? What can we do then? Such behavior should be regarded as a symptom. There is some wish or need the child is trying to satisfy. Sometimes he spends all his money for pop for the other children. Why does he do this? Does he feel that the others won't play with him or respect him unless he does? How does it happen that he has to fall back on such a method to get the respect of others? Doesn't he have any skills or ideas or hobbies that the others respect? What can we do to help him gain a place for himself without having to treat the others all the time?



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When a child continually spends his money in a way that doesn't help him, there are reasons. It is our business to know what those reasons are. Does the child feel inadequate, insecure, or deprived of a reasonable chance? If so, he is not emotionally free to make wise choices about money. He needs help and understanding.

Another point to keep in mind is that every child must be given some motivation for taking on the additional responsibility of money. He should be shown the value of this responsibility. If he can be made to see how it will help him to become the kind of person he wants to become, he will have one of the strongest possible motives.

The Family as a Financial Unit

It is also helpful for him to know how the amount of his allowance and his use of it are related to the family's general financial arrangements. Unexpected situations may arise in any family. There may be hospital bills, closed factories, wars, or higher prices. Any of these may necessitate a change in the child's allowance or in his attitude toward what he and his family need. He cannot be expected to understand automatically why his allowance has been cut, or to work out an adjustment to the change, unless he can see the relation of this event to the total picture. The whole family, planning together in a family council, can discuss the necessary changes and also the child's opportunities to earn. Increases as well as decreases in responsibility and in income call for family discussion.

How early should a child take part in family discussions? As early as he can understand what it is all about. We often do not realize how much our children understand. When we observe them carefully, they sometimes surprise us by their ability and common sense. It is a good plan, therefore, to observe your child closely, see how much he does gain from a discussion, and then decide on his participation in the family council.

The Question of Thrift

Another important point is that the child who manages his own money must suffer the logical consequences of unwise spending. If he spends all his money before the next allowance or before his next pay check comes, supplying him at random with additional funds may defeat the whole system of training. If he really needs help, he may borrow the money from his parents, but he should do so with a clear understanding that it is to be repaid at a specified time. In no other way can he

learn the true and inevitable consequences of bad money management.

Indeed as a further extension of his experience, it is helpful for the child to get some practice in borrowing, lending, and saving. There has been a great deal of difficulty in past decades, especially as to saving. During the depression and during each of the two world wars the life savings of many families were wiped out. Saving is not just a simple matter of putting money away for a college education. We often call that thrift, but real thrift is achieved when we begin to understand the advantages and risks of borrowing or saving.

The child can begin to learn some of these advantages and difficulties by saving for some immediate object, such as a pair of shoes, a sled, a pair of skates, or a bicycle. In a recent investigation it was shown that some fourth-grade children were trying to save for a bicycle by laying away five cents a week. Apparently no one had pointed out to them how many years it would take before they could save up enough for a bicycle. It is best to begin with some smaller object, such as a sled or a pair of skates, or adults may pay part of the cost of a bicycle and the child may contribute the remainder from his savings. Practice in saving for some object that costs more than one week's allowance can be helpful only if it is done for something the child really appreciates and if the amount of money involved is not outside the range of his understanding. The question of how many weeks or months it will take must be clearly explained.

As the child grows older—say by the time he reaches junior high school—we can discuss with him further the difficulties we are facing in our plans for the future, and he can begin to work out his own arrangements for future needs. At this age he can also begin to read elementary discussions of economics and money problems. He may well then understand more clearly, and become more capable of meeting, the adjustments required by a constantly changing economy.

Above all, it will help both us and the child if we realize that learning to handle money is not a simple matter for anyone. It involves the very difficult problem of learning to judge and recognize values. The actual practice obtained from handling money or earning it or both, the guidance that comes from an intelligent family council, and the further guidance of heart-to-heart talks with his parents—these are one of the birthrights of every child. The task is not easy, but it is very important. And it can be done.

See outline, questions, and reading references on page 36.

The High Art of Belonging

BONARO
W.
OVERSTREET

VIII.

A BALANCED DIET OF BELONGING

MOST of the organized groups that form the structure of our modern community life have been started within the past seventy-five years, many of them within the past thirty or forty years. During this same period even our old and durable institutions—the church, for example—have formed groups within groups that were not part of their original setup. Ours, in brief, is an age marked by invention and high productivity in the field of social organization no less than in the field of technology. People have needed new ways of coming together because an industrial and urban arrangement of things has largely destroyed their old ways of coming together. They have needed new ways, and out of their need they have variously and ingeniously created their clubs, congresses, and associations.

When we ask what it is that we have been looking for, what it is that we have been trying to accomplish by all our multifarious organizing and joining, we come, I think, to a quite simple answer: *We have been seeking out unique twentieth-century ways of acting like neighbors.* In our cities, even in fairly small cities, we are strangers to one another. But we are still human beings with all the communal hunger of human beings—all the urgent wish to belong, to companion, to share in common enterprises, to give help where

help is called for. We are still neighbors at heart, and we have resourcefully found our ways and invented our ways to be neighbors in action.

Neighbors in Knowledge

IF THIS analysis of our modern tendency to form groups is correct—and I think it is, in psychological terms—then perhaps the best way for us to go about describing a balanced diet of belonging would be to ask ourselves what varied experiences were included in the ancient art of neighbor-ing.

THERE would be less yearning for the “good old days” if there were more understanding of the good new days. It is because Mrs. Overstreet helps us to gain rich understanding that these “belonging” articles of hers are so valuable. Surely the fumbling and stumbling that often make our social life difficult would be more tolerable if we could but realize that building operations are in progress. Road blocks, mudholes, and detours can’t be helped. But they can be understood.

We might note, first of all, that neighbors in our old-time small communities *learned from one another and learned together*. They exchanged recipes and quilt patterns and new ideas about fertilizers and the care of farm animals. In their missionary circles and their literary circles they heard the same speaker from China and heard the same book reviews. And they all studied the same textbooks: the local paper and a farm and home journal.

It is of course an oversimplification to say that they *all* did any one of these things. But enough of them did to establish shared knowledge as a major factor in the experience of neighborhood. They talked a common language largely because they drew their information and their opinions from common sources.

The will to exchange knowledge and to share knowledge is still deep in us. It must always be so, we can suppose. It must be so because one of the most distinctive of our human traits is what we call the power to build a tradition; that is, the power to learn from our ancestors and our contemporaries not merely from trial and error. But our situation has changed. Accordingly we have changed the channels of knowledge. Instead of copying off a new recipe in a neighbor's kitchen, we and the neighbor together join a cooking class. Or we become neighbors in spirit by joining that class, even though we may live many city blocks apart and may never see each other on any other occasion. Instead of drawing all our economic and political opinions from the same local paper and thereby becoming neighbors in belief, we join classes and discussion groups and community forums. Instead of simply pooling our experience and neighbor lore when it comes to the handling of Johnny's measles or Mary's tantrums, we join the P.T.A. and enter into a shared experience of learning the best that is so far known about child nature and child needs.

Life's Lighter Side

IN THE second place, small-community neighbors *played together*. They had their basket suppers, Fourth of July picnics, Saturday night band con-

certs, church bazaars, spelling bees, community sings. Through the years they did a good deal of laughing together and planning together. They built a good many common memories. They learned to know one another well enough to recognize and make allowance for a good many personal quirks and oddities. And they built friendships through association.

Today, because the life situation has changed, we laugh and plan and play together in organized groups. Recently, for example, my husband and I spent an afternoon in San Francisco with a group called the New Outlooks Club, a group organized to bring older people together for shared enjoyment. Recently also we visited, in another western community, a teen-age canteen—a place where high school boys and girls could get together in



A group of parent-teacher members in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, meet to discuss a council project.

their own clubhouse for enterprises as various as folk dancing and photography. In no small measure, today, the institutions that give pattern to our common life are designed to provide experiences in common social enjoyment.

Helping Hands, Outreaching Arms

AGAIN, small-community neighbors *helped one another in time of need*. We still do, as individuals, help one another in time of need, if we know where the need is and what it is. But we have come to realize that in this area our full urge to be neighborly cannot be expressed through

the occasional chances we have to help out with the chores in a home where there is sickness or to lend such money as we can spare to a young chap we know who is starting off to college on a shoestring. Therefore we establish our Community Chests. We send packages to CARE. We work, through our P.T.A. and other organizations, for better juvenile courts, better mental hospitals, better child guidance clinics, better school budgets.

As small-town neighbors, once more, we took care of our community housekeeping. We were political neighbors—voters who cast our ballots to elect local officers and set up laws for the common good. We still are political neighbors at the local level, but often, now, we have not only to study issues but to make our wishes felt through organizations such as the League of Women Voters or a nonpartisan league. Today, moreover, we have to be political neighbors at a world level. Therefore we unite to support UNESCO, to study the foreign policy of our State Department, to help out students in war-demolished lands, to build fellowship through world-wide service clubs and religious movements.

The Fruits of Social Invention

THE best way, in short, to understand our modern pattern of belonging is to understand how our human nature has always tried to express itself through the experience of the neighborhood. And the best way in which we can decide what to join—in which we can decide what constitutes a balanced diet of belonging—is to size up the neighboring experiences of our own daily lives. Are we giving ourselves a chance to learn from other people and with other people, so that we and they together can do a more competent job of living? Are we giving ourselves a rich and joyous chance to play with others and to laugh with them, plan with them, and build common memories with them? Are we giving ourselves a full, responsible chance to help others when they need help? Are we giving ourselves a practical chance to be in on

the making of better human arrangements—political, economic, and social?

In the old-time community, of course, not all individuals were, in spiritual or psychological terms, neighbors. Some of them might live next door in body, but they were outside the common pattern of sharing. Every small town, for example, had its few snobs and social climbers. Today in our more complex civilization we find the spirit of these people in groups that are far more proud of their exclusiveness than of their humanity.

Every small town also had its few vindictive gossips—those tragic, off-the-line individuals who got their sense of personal significance out of pulling down the reputations of others. Today we find here and there organized groups that are, psychologically, the village gossip writ large—groups that foster racial and religious prejudice.

Every small town had its few individuals who were eaten by personal ambition. Their one aim was to get ahead by any means at hand, to make a profit, gain prestige, win power over others. Today there are groups in which such people band together with no aim higher than that of getting for themselves all that the traffic will bear.

By and large, however, the multitudinous committees, clubs, leagues, adult education classes, religious fellowships, and other groups that mark our culture as one that is rich in social invention are a twentieth-century expression of good will. They are the American conscience at work. They are the American spirit of fellowship at play. They are the American wish-to-know hard at the job of learning.

No one of us can join even a fraction of the groups that might, theoretically, help us to express our will to learn, to companion, to help. But once we catch on to the fact that through the groups we do join we enter into the twentieth-century version of the ancient art of neighboring, we have a test by which to measure the groups that invite us to membership. We have a test by which to determine whether or not we are enjoying in our own lives a balanced diet of belonging.

WHEN that most welcome music of childhood, the bell dismissing classes, rings forth at Public School 31, Buffalo, New York, the children of the primary grades do not rush like mad out the doors and run for home. Instead they go directly to the "pickup room," a schoolroom especially set aside for them, where they await older escorts who will guide them safely home through traffic.

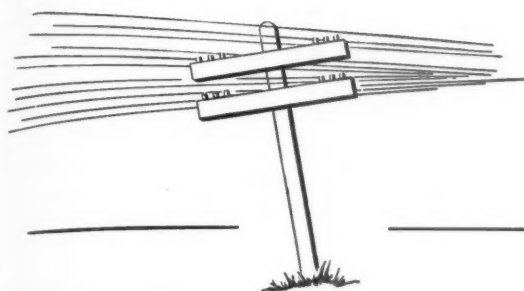
School Principal Vincent A. Carberry explains the innovation: "The school devised this system so that the little children could not slip off on their own. The primary grades, kindergarten through the third, are dismissed fifteen minutes earlier than the other classes. The teachers know which children are to be called for and escorted, and these are sent to the pickup room, which is always under faculty supervision."

A child who cannot be taken home by a parent or a brother or sister in the upper grades is assigned an older pupil who lives near him and who sees him home regularly. The walls of the pickup room bear colorful, dramatic safety posters that implant on youthful minds the perils of traffic.

—JOHN WINTERS FLEMING

Notes from the

NEWSFRONT



School Statistics.—The effect of the recent soaring birth rate will be felt in the schools for years to come. The Bureau of the Census estimates that elementary schools may expect their peak enrollment in 1957, with about 26½ million pupils, or 46 per cent more than in 1947. High school enrollment will decline slightly until 1951. After that it will rise rapidly until 1960, when there will be more than eight million high school students, or 29 per cent more than in 1947.

Scientific Prying.—It seems as if men of science simply cannot keep out of other people's business. Now they want to know what goes on inside an oyster! Two of them have invented an instrument that records an oyster's every twitch, even when the shell is clamped on tight. Presumably to add dignity to the research, the instrument is called an *ostreodynamometer*.

Paths of Peace.—The Second National Conference on UNESCO, scheduled for March 31–April 2 at Cleveland, has for its theme these words by Louis Pasteur: "I hold the unconquerable belief that science and peace will triumph over ignorance and war, that nations will come together not to destroy but to construct, and that the future belongs to those who accomplish most for humanity."

Transatlantic Children.—The Nursery School Association of Great Britain has begun publication of an attractive new quarterly magazine, *Young Children*. In the first number Lady Allen of Hurtwood, president of the association, writes: "We believe that in working for the young child we can help to repair the break in universal friendship. . . . It is our aim to stir people all over the world to think more carefully about the better upbringing of young children and the happiness of the family."

Brighter, Safer Cities.—According to the Street and Traffic Safety Lighting Bureau, 67.7 per cent of all city traffic deaths occur in darkness, at dusk, or at dawn on unlighted or inadequately lighted streets. In addition, more than five times as many crimes occur in the dark as in good light. After thirteen cities had relighted their streets, they reported to the bureau a marked reduction in the number of night traffic deaths, a drop in crime and property damage, and—on the positive side—improved business, higher property values, and enhanced civic prestige.

Modern Midwives.—Even in twentieth-century America the ancient and honorable profession of midwifery continues to flourish. The 21,500 midwives in this country are expected to deliver 175,000 babies in 1949, or 13 per cent of the total.

The Nation's Diet.—Americans are better nourished today than they were before the war in spite of high food prices, says the Council on Foods and Nutrition of the American Medical Association. One of the most gratifying improvements has been in the greater quantity of milk consumed. There has also been an increase in consumption of citrus fruit and green and yellow vegetables.

Booked for a Longer Run.—The Freedom Train will continue to tour America until July 5, 1951, giving more thousands of citizens the chance to see its historic freight. This time Congress is underwriting expenses.

Appointment in Washington.—Earl J. McGrath, professor of education at the University of Chicago, has been nominated by President Truman to the key post of U.S. Commissioner of Education, succeeding John W. Studebaker, who resigned last summer. Dr. McGrath was a member of the commission sent to Germany by the State Department in 1946 to set up a management policy for schools in the American zone.

The ABC's.—As anyone who has read Poe's "Gold Bug" knows, not all twenty-six letters of the alphabet carry an equal load in the English language. The workhorse of the team is the letter *e*, which is used by far the most frequently. Next in order as hard workers come *t*, *a*, *i*, *s*, and *o*. To nobody's surprise *z* is the drone, but he is closely tailed by *x*, *q*, *j*, and *k*. Capital letters are another matter. *S* is used most often and *X* least often.

Education's Entangling Alliance.—The present arrangement whereby the U.S. Office of Education is "submerged in a superwelfare department" constitutes "a serious threat to state and local control of education," according to E. B. Norton, an advisory editor of this magazine and former Deputy Commissioner of Education. In an article entitled "Inside F.S.A." appearing in the February issue of *The Nation's Schools*, Dr. Norton analyzes this "hodge-podge holding company" and comes to the conclusion that now is the time to establish an independent U.S. Office of Education.

Far from Funny.—The French National Assembly has created a censorship committee to review objectionable comic books, which, Communist members were quick to point out, are imported from the United States.

A NOTICE TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

If the first two code figures just below your name and address on this issue of the magazine are 5-49, this means that your subscription will expire with the May *National Parent-Teacher*. We suggest that you renew it now to avoid delay in receiving the June issue. Send one dollar to the National Parent-Teacher, 600 South Michigan Boulevard, Chicago 5, Illinois.

When a School Child *Stutters*

WE HEAR much nowadays of speech defects in children. Stuttering is commonly included among them, but not accurately so. As this article makes plain, the stuttering child usually has a deeper trouble of which his stuttering is the symbol and symptom. What can his parents and teachers do to help him? Is there any known formula that will work for all?

WHY CAN'T Jimmy talk right, Mrs. Adams?" Mrs. Adams turned to look at the little boy from next door who had come home from school with her own son. She bit her tongue to keep from answering sharply. But the little boy was not laughing, like most of the other children; he was just curious.

"How do you mean?" she questioned after a moment.

"Well, I know why Jimmy won't come down and go skating with us. It's because of the way he talks."

"The way he talks?"

"Sure, Mrs. Adams. Everyone knows Jimmy stutters. Just today he started to answer a question in class, and he stood up and opened his mouth, but nothing came out. Then he started waving his hands around and jerking his head, and finally he just sat down and put his head on the desk. And all the kids laughed. And the teacher got cross and told him not to waste everyone's time. Then she told the kids to stop laughing. Well, we went on with the lesson, but when the period was over the kids teased Jimmy in the hall, and one called him a dummy."

"I—I see," said Mrs. Adams. She was suffering inwardly for her son. Why hadn't the teacher told the boys that they were being nasty? Why hadn't she punished them? But would punishing the boys really have helped Jimmy?

Mrs. Adams sat and watched the boy from next door, her son's best friend, as he put on his hat, shouldered his skates, and left the house. She heard him call to a friend up the street and arrange to go skating without Jimmy.

Tonight Jimmy would be moody at the dinner table. He would be curt and discourteous to his father. He would stutter whenever he tried to talk. Mrs. Adams could see that the suggestion Jimmy's grandmother had made—that Jimmy should be made to repeat whatever words he had stuttered—had been a failure. What should she do now? Talk to the teacher again? The teacher had repeatedly said she didn't know what to do about Jimmy's speech. He talked well at times, especially during gym periods and recess. A neighbor had suggested that Jimmy stuttered to avoid reciting when he was unprepared. But Jimmy had always been a good student—until lately.

Mrs. Adams, like many another parent, could remember her horror when Jimmy had first begun to stumble in his speech. His father had also stuttered as a boy, and he was sure his son would outgrow it. It just needed to be corrected. Well, they had tried to correct him, and it hadn't worked.



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What To Do?

WHAT can parents do for a child who stutters? Should he be corrected when he stutters? How can the teacher handle the problem in the classroom? What causes stuttering? These are some of the questions that confront the speech correctionist daily. They are asked by sympathetic teachers and by the parents of something over 1 per cent of the school population.

Although stuttering cannot be actually cured, much can be done to eliminate the irritations that make it worse. An environment can be arranged, both in the home and in the school, that will help to prevent stuttering. Finally, the stuttering child can be helped to make a better personal adjustment. This usually aids in reducing the tendency to stutter, which is only a symptom of some deeper trouble within.

Probably in the strictest sense, stuttering is not actually a speech defect at all. It is regarded by most speech correctionists rather as a symptom that all is not, or has not been, well with the child at home, in his neighborhood, or at school. It is not a disease and therefore is not, as some parents believe, contagious. The stutterer is no more likely to

AMY BISHOP CHAPIN

have a malformation of the tongue or of the throat than is a child with normal speech. He is equally likely to be a basically strong, healthy, intelligent youngster.

The child who has many noticeable interruptions in his speech, who repeats words or sounds, or who has a forced holding back of speech ("stopped on a word") is said to stutter. Stuttering may be accompanied by facial grimaces, tossing of the head, blinking of the eyes, or any of numerous other signs of body tension. These muscular spasms may involve the breathing mechanism, the vocal apparatus, the lip, the tongue, or the jaw, causing rigidity during speech.

Stuttering children use the same muscles skillfully in eating or swallowing. Also, most of them can speak perfectly well at one time or another. For example, most of them can sing without stuttering or talk in unison. They may talk fluently in playing with imaginary playmates or with babies or animals. Often they are perfectly fluent with people they know well and trust.

The school child may speak fairly well with his home room teacher and his close friends, and yet have only labored speech when talking to the principal. He may seem to have difficulty with a few words or with any word starting with a given sound. Yet even these so-called difficult words will come out easily when he feels completely confident and at home.

Children who stutter are likely to have certain characteristics in common. To begin with, the child is much more likely to be a boy than a girl. In stuttering as in certain other disorders that are classified by the medical profession as "emotional in origin," men and boys greatly outnumber girls and women. Possibly this is because boys are more often subjected to pressure to "grow up," "be brave," and so on, than are girls.

With children of either sex stuttering most frequently begins in the second or third year. It is a time when most children are greatly concerned with language and when they are probably more often criticized for their speech than at any other age. A child's baby talk and his amusing mistakes get a tremendous amount of attention from adults. If he is corrected too much, he finds himself very conscious of his errors, even ashamed of them.



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Most children of two or three frequently repeat and stumble over words. This repetition may cause the parents to become unduly anxious. Professor Wendell Johnson has expressed the opinion that most stutterers are first labeled stutterers at home by their parents. The first attack of stuttering is often connected with some frightening incident. The child who is discovered doing something he shouldn't be doing often stutters his excuse. Stuttering frequently appears after a serious fall or other accident, an operation, or a sudden change in family life.

If stuttering does not start in the early stages of language development, it may begin under suddenly increased pressure at home or at school. For example, many a child begins to stutter when another member of the family becomes seriously ill or when unusual tension at home is caused by the coming of a new baby. Many children begin to stutter when they enter kindergarten or first grade and must suddenly adjust themselves to the increased complications of school life. The tensions that arise at the beginning of adolescence may also play an important role. Most often, however, stuttering appears in the early years, when the newly developing function of speech is still unstable.

There are always those who say, like Mr. Adams, "He'll outgrow it." A more nearly accurate comment would be "He'll solve the problems that underlie it." It is our obligation as teachers and parents to try to discover these basic problems, which may differ greatly from one youngster to another, and to help the child in solving them.

Complicating Home Problems

ANYTHING in the home situation that increases tension and pressure on the stuttering child is likely to aggravate his difficulty. Such a situation may even cause stuttering and other nervous symptoms. The home in which there is a great deal of argument and bickering and ill feeling is always hazardous for the sensitive child. Inconsistencies between grandmother's methods of discipline and mother's, or between mother's and father's, may leave a feeling of insecurity that results in greater speech difficulties.

Probably the most serious factor of all is the nagging perfectionism that characterizes some homes. It is normal for parents to wish their children to be well prepared for life, but driving the child to meet hopelessly high standards can bring only fear and anxiety. Constant unfavorable contrast with other children also is to be avoided. The child's defeat in his efforts to please those nearest him is likely to be reflected in everything he attempts, including speech. A final complication that often handicaps the stuttering child is the tendency of other members of the family, usually the mother, to shield him from all dangers. A child should be taught how to approach street crossings, not led across by his fearful parents. And this weaning process should take place as early as possible.

The stuttering child needs a home in which he feels he is a successful, accepted partner of a team. He needs to feel that

he will always be welcomed and wanted when he gets home and that his family are interested in him and sympathetic toward him, whatever happens at school or at play.

Stuttering itself should be treated casually at home. The whole family should accept it as if it were a simple disorder that will soon pass. The child should be given the same opportunity to talk as any other member of the family is. He should not be interrupted or corrected for his stuttering. No matter what any friend, relative, or neighbor has suggested ("Take a deep breath" or "Say it over"), the whole family should respond to the child's stuttering just as they would to the speech of anyone else. He should not be congratulated when he speaks fluently, either, since this draws unnecessary attention to the matter. If, however, the child himself wants to talk about his stuttering, his family should be willing to listen calmly and reassuringly.

Often a father does not realize the importance of his role in helping a boy who stutters. A father who is willing to be a real friend, to give his son freely of his time and interest, can often do as much as a speech teacher. The importance to the child of knowing that *both parents* love him and are proud of him may mean the difference between success and failure in treating stuttering at the speech clinic.

Complications at School

THE child who stutters often suffers even more from his classmates and teachers than from his family. Other children tease him, and no teacher can keep this from happening. The child should be given confidence enough to tell the other children what his parents have explained to him—that many children stutter when they are very young and some still have trouble at school age but that his speech is growing better and better.

Every child needs to know how to deal with other children. A stuttering child should never be isolated from his age fellows. In a good school a stuttering child may be elected president of his class, for stuttering is a handicap *only if the child is permitted to think it is*. Wise teachers and parents will not excuse him from doing certain things, such as answering the telephone or sharing responsibility in class, because of his speech. He should never be allowed to blame his failures on stuttering.

This often places a great responsibility on the classroom teacher. What shall she do? Call on the child and

let the whole class wait while he stutters an answer? Probably most speech correctionists would agree that he should be given an equal opportunity to recite or to volunteer. It may help if there is an understanding between the child and the teacher about when he is to recite.

The teacher should be calm and patient. If the other children are overly conscious of the stutter she should not make an issue of it but simply give patient attention and, if need be, explain to the class that everyone stutters sometimes and that every child's ideas are equally important to her and to the class. To help build confidence she can let the child take charge of blackboard or bulletin board or give him some classroom responsibility in which he can compete and succeed without speech. He should not, of course, be forced into situations he obviously fears.

When he feels secure in his role as a successful member of the group, the child who stutters will probably not create any special behavior problem. But if the teacher herself is embarrassed about his speech, she will probably find him trying to call attention to himself in undesirable ways. Many a stuttrer is labeled "bad" simply because his natural urge to express himself is cut off by lack of understanding from the teacher. He has the same need to compete as have the other children. He should be neither favored nor ostracized because of his speech alone.

The Parent-Teacher Team

NO PARENT or teacher should call undue attention to any child's speech. Whether or not he is to have special speech correction work in school, the classroom teacher only makes things worse by shaming him or offering suggestions in front of the class. Such efforts, however well intended, merely cause speech to become more of an emotional hurdle for the child.

Teacher and parents should decide on a method of building up the child's confidence. Often the teacher can give aid to the family, since she sees so many children of the same age and also knows what individual problems the child faces in getting along with the group. She sees his strengths and can encourage special abilities. The stuttrer needs the same kind of intelligent individual guidance in getting along in school as does the problem child. He needs the same security in the schoolroom as at home. He must feel himself a part of things, a relative success in competition, both academic and social. Above all, he needs the calm, casual acceptance of himself and his stuttering at home and school alike.

Some Do's and Don'ts for Parents and Teachers

Don't try to correct the child by asking him to "say it over" and so forth.

Don't tell all the children to stop teasing him.

Don't be afraid to let the child confide his problems to you.

Don't shield him from his father or other critical relatives.

Don't worry about his speech without doing anything constructive.

Don't be too critical of all his little childish imperfections.

Don't call too much attention to his speech difficulty.

Don't swamp him with sympathy and emotional responses.

Don't ask the teacher to treat the stuttering child as if he were sick.

Do ignore the stuttering as such but look for undue tension at home and in school.

Do discuss stuttering calmly with the child if he brings it up, and let him do his own explaining.

Do help him to solve his social difficulties as you would help any other child.

Do help him to become a pal to his father.

Do teach him how to accept criticism without despair.

Do try to build his confidence by praising his strengths and understanding his weaknesses.

Do let him see that you regard his problem without fear.

Do urge everyone to accept him as he is—including his stuttering.



NPT Quiz Program

COMING TO YOU OVER STATION H-O-M-E

Through the Facilities of the National Parent-Teacher

GUEST CONDUCTOR: WINIFRED HAZEN

Consultant in Family Life Education, Department of Public Instruction, State of Utah

WE are the parents of two children, a girl four and a boy twelve. Often sex questions come up when the children are together. If I answer the question to meet the older boy's needs, won't I harm the younger child?

★ If a question about sex comes up when both a four-year-old and a twelve-year-old are present, it should be answered at the time in a manner that will be satisfying to the four-year-old. Later it can be talked over more in detail with the twelve-year-old. A very simple answer will satisfy a four-year-old. She isn't interested in particulars. As soon as her initial curiosity is allayed, her interest will probably be somewhere else. The twelve-year-old is old enough to talk more completely with you, and this will take more time.

However, keep in mind that if the younger child should happen to listen to an explanation about some aspect of sex that is in keeping with the older youngster's need, no harm will be done. Wholesome, accurate facts about life can do no harm to anyone.

ONE of my third-grade students came to me after recess saying, "Miss Jones, do you want to see a nasty book?" I discovered he was talking about The Story of a Baby by Marie Hall Ets, which, as you know, is full of artistic pictures of babies from the time of conception through fetal development. What could I have done to change his attitude?

★ Youngsters who have had no sex education, or only the inaccurate, unwholesome kind picked up hither and yon, often react in this manner the first time they see a modern sex education book containing pictures, line drawings, and diagrams. Through no

fault of their own they have developed the idea that anything which has to do with babies before they are born is nasty or bad.

Unfortunately many adults have this attitude, too. Teachers and parents may well expect such a reaction and should regard it as just one of those natural situations that provide an opportunity to help the child gain some insight and wholesome feelings about "where babies come from."

Perhaps the situation might have been handled something like this:

John: Miss Jones, do you want to see a nasty book?

Miss Jones: I'd like to see it. Will you show it to me?

John: Here it is.

Miss Jones (taking the book): Thank you, John. (Sitting him down and pulling him up close.) The pictures in this book are some of my favorite pictures of babies. One way this book is different and more interesting than most of our picture books is that the pictures show how a baby looks while he is growing in his mother's body be-



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fore he is born, as well as how he looks after he is born. You know, every baby grows for some time—about nine months, in fact—in his mother's body before he is big and strong enough to live in the outside world.

(While this conversation is going on, Miss Jones is turning the pages, showing John the pictures, and pointing out the captions to him. Since the babies pictured in this particular book have no relationship to the mother's body, Miss Jones also shows John a picture of a mother with a baby growing in her body, so he will not be confused.)

Miss Jones: Do you want to take this with you to your seat and look at it some more? Maybe you'll think of some other questions you'd like to ask me.

Before John goes home Miss Jones might well slip out of the room to give his mother a ring on the telephone, telling her of John's interest and what she herself has told him. Thus she is preparing the way for a sympathetic hearing from his mother, should John want to talk further when he gets home. She might also invite his mother to drop in within a day or two to see the books they have in the school on sex education for children.

Often when sex education books are made available to youngsters in a schoolroom or school library we find them giggling over them with heads close together or nudging one another. This indicates that they need help in interpretation from a comfortable, understanding adult. It is our cue to talk with them, to be interested in the book along with them, and to answer their questions.

WHAT can parents do with a child who comes home using vulgar words? Washing out his mouth with soap or taking away his allowance just hasn't worked.

★ There is probably no parent who does not have to face, at some time, a child who brings home a vulgar or exceedingly pungent and expressive word or phrase. But if from the time he began to talk the child has learned the correct words for the parts of the body and bodily functions, it is fairly simple to help him. If he does not have a suitable vocabulary, this is a good time to get him started learning the correct terms.

The parents' own attitude should be matter-of-fact and relaxed in order to leave the way open for easy conversation. The minute their reaction is a shocked, horrified, or punitive one, the doors of communication are closed and little or no help can be given. Also it is well to understand that much of the child's satisfaction in using vulgar words comes from his parents' excited reaction.

Children enjoy using words, those that are fitting and dignified as well as those that are unacceptable. They not only like to experiment with these words but often as not have only a hazy notion about their meaning. Unfortunately they may have the feeling that the word means something awful, and there is a sort of delicious, horrified thrill that comes from using it.

To illustrate a specific situation, let us say that the child has come home using a four-letter word that means "to mate."

Parent: I'm interested in the word you just said. Did you learn about it today?

Child: Uh-huh, somebody wrote it on the wall in the boys' toilet, and the kids were all laughing about it, and the janitor was awful mad.

Parent (matter-of-factly): Do you know what it means?

Child: No-o-o, but it's sumpin' awful, 'cause the kids were whispering and scared of what would happen.

Parent (because the child has been taught suitable words earlier): Why, yes, you do. You have known that word for a long time. All it means is "to mate."

Child: Is that all?

Parent (comfortably): That's all. Many people, boys and girls and men and women, have never been taught suitable words, so the only ones they have to use are vulgar or ignorant ones. Since you know the correct word, *mate*, you won't have to use the ignorant one.

If your child has never been taught a suitable and adequate vocabulary, instead of assuring him that he does know the meaning, and has for a long time, it will be necessary to explain that the word means "to mate" and also what mating means. This may be just the opportunity you have been looking for to talk with him about human growth.

I AM a librarian in a junior high school. Recently I discovered that whenever I pick up dictionaries or encyclopedias they automatically open to pages where there are pictures or references to anatomy and definitions of sex terms. What can I do? The books can't very well be put where the students cannot get at them.

★ The fact that the dictionaries and encyclopedias are being used in this manner shows clearly and unmistakably that these junior high school youngsters are eager for information about their own and the opposite sex.

The most helpful approach that a librarian could make would be to provide a wealth of reading material about growth and development suitable for this age level. These books should be put on open shelves where they are easily accessible and can be used without the students' making a special request for them. Several copies of each should be available so no one has to wait too long for a turn. Avoid making any special rules or regulations regarding the use of books on sex education. They should be handled the same as all the others.

Many excellent books are being published today that are suitable for a junior high school library. Here are a few suggestions: *Being Born* (Macmillan) and *Teen Days* (Appleton-Century) by Frances Bruce Strain, *The Wonder of Life* (Simon and Schuster) by Milton T. Levine and Jean H. Seligmann, *Growing into Manhood* (Association Press) by Roy E. Dickerson, and *Attaining Womanhood* (Harper) by George W. Corner.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN EDUCATION?



● I would like to have any information you can furnish that will help in preparing programs for an international relations club.—A. R. M.

I REPEATED your request to a young lady with a charming voice in the United Nations Department of Public Information. You will get a variety of materials on UN. These include *What To Get and Where To Get It*, a document that lives up to its title by telling you where to turn for United Nations flags; what films, filmstrips, and posters can be had and how; where to write for information on the habits, customs, travel, peoples, and culture of various countries; where to get radio programs and scripts; and how to secure information on the specialized UN agencies. And there is much more. I'm just picking the high spots.

What will be most helpful to you are the *Suggestions to High School Student Organizations for Promoting United Nations Activities*. You will find some eight activities listed, all of which have been tried out. The leaflet suggests also that you write United Nations Youth, 45 East Sixty-fifth Street, New York 21, New York, and the International Relations Committee of the National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street Northwest, Washington 6, D. C.

Why not make listening to *Memo from Lake Success*, a weekly radio program Saturday evenings at 6:15 EST, one of the club's regular activities? A number of stations carry this CBS feature. If you can't find it on your local program listings, write for an index of stations to the Radio Division, Department of Public Information, Lake Success, New York.

THIS department gives parents and teachers up-to-the-minute information on current educational trends, presented in the form of answers to questions from our readers. The director, William D. Boutwell, educator of broad experience, tells us what is going on in the schools of today and what may be expected in the schools of tomorrow.

While you have pen in hand you might as well ask also for *United Nations Publications Recommended for Schools and Colleges* and for a parallel list called *Nonofficial Publications*.

As an excellent immediate project why not celebrate Pan American Day, which is April 14? For this the following new or revised aids are available: a booklet of *Folk Songs and Dances*, with music and instructions; *Program Suggestions* for elementary and secondary schools; and other printed materials. Write to the Education Division, Organization of the American States, Washington, D. C.

● I have been asked by my fellow P.T.A. members to obtain information from as many sources as possible on character education. We wish to emphasize this important subject on our program. Our state chairman of character and spiritual education has suggested many fine activities, a number of them related to character training in the schools. Can you tell us how various schools are handling this?—Mrs. M. J. M.

FEAR lest the building of character—integrity, moral values, the golden rule, uprightness—get lost in the school's preoccupation with subject matter and skills worries many people. And has for a long time. From that concern stems, in part, the drive for religious education.

No doubt your librarian can turn up a number of articles and books. For a recent, brief, and very helpful source send fifty cents for *Character Education, a Survey of Practice in the Public Schools of the United States* by Henry Lester Smith, the Palmer Foundation, Box 621, Texarkana, Texas.

As this study points out, there are two ways to conduct character education, the direct and the indirect:

In general, the first is the use of definite times, places, and materials for giving specific instruction in morals and manners, ideals, ethics, religion, etc., for the purpose of strengthening the character of individuals. The second, or indirect, method is the attempt to affect character by environment, activities, literature, art, and experiences of all kinds, without considering this as character education, without offering specific courses, and without having a regular time for giving instruction.

Which is best? No one knows for sure.

Expert opinion inclines toward the indirect method, holding that character education is something that should be integrated with the entire school operation. On the other hand, the survey declares,

There are schools all over the country—in large cities, in towns, and in rural areas—actually making use of the [direct] method and enthusiastic over the good results obtained. In short, while some are crying "It can't be done," others are going ahead and doing it.

Just how both types are being conducted is discussed in the section entitled "Twenty Patterns of Character Education." Then we are given this warning:

The term "character education" should probably be used only in connection with plans and programs which are for teacher (and we presume parent) use.

Some schools call their programs "citizenship training" or "training in moral and spiritual ideals" or "democratic ideals."

At the close of the study you will find a list of twenty cities or states that conduct character education programs. I'm sure you can secure more information on those plans that most interest your group.

If citizenship is your main concern, see Detroit's *Democratic Citizenship and Development of Children*, an outcome of a citizenship education study conducted by the Detroit Public Schools and Wayne University, and a very practical one. Send fifty cents to the Detroit Citizenship Education Study, 463 Merrick Street, Detroit 2, Michigan, for a copy.

In connection with this subject I suggest that you and your P.T.A. co-workers be sure to see the new film *Down to the Sea in Ships*, reviewed by Mrs. Hedges on page 38 of this magazine. Here you will find one issue in character education presented with drama. Is character education more important than schooling for a particular lad? A nice question that will keep discussion rolling for a long time.

● Where can I get music for a school program on the United Nations?—W. J. T.

ON THIS point the United Nations wishes you would send them some! There is as yet no official United Nations song or anthem, although UN does have a song written for the United Nations Appeal for Children called *Let's Make the World of Tomorrow Today*.

Two years ago the students of Horace Mann-Lincoln School in New York wrote a singable one-world song. For a copy of this, send your request to Dr. Helen Baker, 19 Pingry Place, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

● Our school board once became quite interested in buying an FM radio transmitter, but now they are not sure that it would be a good investment. There are stories going around that FM won't be very popular. Then some people say why install a school radio station when television may make radio as out of date as silent movies? Should we keep working for an FM transmitter?—S. E. M.

LET'S take these objections one at a time. Will television make radio extinct? I doubt it. You can't drive a car while you look at a television screen. You can't do housework. You can't read. Moreover, the number of television channels will remain low. That means that the number of transmitters will likewise remain low; the number of radio transmitters, large. Schools might be given television licenses, but it's doubtful.

Will FM radio be less popular? I met a man recently who bought a set that receives only FM. He says he gets all the programs on it, since practically all regular AM stations also broadcast on FM. Remember that television receivers use FM for sound.

Should the school board hold back on buying a transmitter? Not for the reasons you cite or for reasons of cost. Boards now have the choice of at least three transmitters. Two sell for about \$1,500. That's less than one fifth the cost of one classroom. Radio communication is no longer a luxury.

FM radio service is taking its place as a school and community educational service in more places every month. In January the fiftieth FM station went on the air. There are now twenty more applications before the Federal Communications Commission. Two libraries ordered transmitters—Louisville, Kentucky, and Greenville, North Carolina. So if your school board won't put in an FM transmitter perhaps the library board will.

● Our legislature is going to consider an increase in state aid for the schools. These lawmakers always demand the latest figures, as you know. I have obtained the booklets you have referred to in previous columns, but are there any new ones?—Mrs. M. B. T.

YES. The U.S. Bureau of the Census has a publication called *State Aid to Local Governments* (Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C.), which contains facts on aid to the schools by the forty-eight states as well as other kinds of aid. Also, on January 10 *The New York Times* came up with a comprehensive, state-by-state summary of school trends—teachers' salaries, number of teachers with emergency certificates, rise in enrollments, number of teachers now needed, and so forth. Your lawmakers should get some help from both these sources.

—WILLIAM D. BOUTWELL



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EMILY
B. H. MUDD

WILL THEY BE READY FOR *Marriage?*

MARRIAGE is a way of life that involves more than 90 per cent of the people of this country at some period in their lives. Among those who undertake marriage, approximately one couple out of every four or five (20 per cent) do not continue in the undertaking. Is it small wonder, then, that all parents feel they have a large stake in the adequate preparation of their sons and daughters for marriage?

Being ready for married life goes far beyond the romantic longing to be married that most

young people feel. Satisfying marriage is difficult to achieve, and it is satisfying marriage that parents want for their children.

Equipment for marriage in the best and truest sense must include skills, attitudes, and values. These are not acquired the day before the venture is undertaken. They are learned day in, day out, from birth on. This is where the parent is irrevocably part of the picture. Consciously or unconsciously, every parent prepares his child for marriage; every child brings into marriage not only himself but the skills, attitudes, and values he has learned from his parents and grandparents.

NOTE: The author wishes to acknowledge with appreciation the assistance of Mrs. Hazel B. Froscher in preparing this article.

This is the eighth article in the series "Psychology of the Adolescent."

Skills Are Practical Aids

SKILLS are the more practical parts of marriage equipment. The ability to be a homemaker requires a number of definite skills. These differ far less than they used to for girls and boys in the American pattern of marriage now developing. Democratic ideals are making of modern marriage a shared responsibility, a cooperative venture in which husband and wife have equal status and in which duties are divided between them in a flexible manner.

Circumstances, too, often force men as well as women to be versatile as homemakers. Because of economic conditions many young couples begin married life today with both working full time. In such circumstances the husband can scarcely avoid sharing the household tasks formerly thought of as exclusively the wife's responsibility. The trend toward careers for women often carries this same cooperation into the later years of marriage. Also, child rearing in itself can be a full-time job, and the considerate husband and father in the best sense of the word (in contrast to Dr. Strecker's "vanishing American father") helps his wife in many ways. There is now no clear-cut line to divide what boys must learn from the skills that girls must acquire, and we think of both when we make the following basic list of the adequate homemaker's equipment:

1. The ability to obtain and hold a job that provides enough income to support oneself and if necessary a partner, a home, and children. In addition, it is desirable to have education or training for a job that offers some degree of personal satisfaction, since lack of satisfaction in work may have serious effects on marriage.

2. Knowledge of the mechanics of maintaining a home, awareness of the necessary conditions for comfort, and ability to care for and repair usual household equipment.

3. Knowledge of cooking, balanced diets, and the care of clothing and personal effects; knowledge of household equipment and routine. (This may run the gamut from coping with the cramped inconvenience of a trailer to managing a large house complete with servants.)

4. Knowledge of what is necessary for financial protection and some degree of security. (This includes budgeting for a standard of living suitable to both partners as well as skill in shopping and in handling money generally.)

5. Knowledge and understanding of health—how to preserve it by meeting daily requirements, how to handle the usual minor illnesses, how and when to get medical advice and from what sources.

6. Knowledge and understanding of sexual needs and behavior, including anatomy, emotional

factors, the techniques of good marital sex adjustment, and the principles of child spacing.

7. Some knowledge of child care and what is involved in planning for and having a baby.

The continuous development of mechanical and industrial devices for easier living and the increasing number of services to the family outside the home (laundry, electrical repair, and so on) make some homemaking skills less important than they have been in the past. Even so, these skills are a great asset. They make marriage run more smoothly and lessen the complication of early adjustments.

Yet many young couples make a success of marriage without the husband's knowing how to change a fuse and without the wife's knowing how to cook or darn. Intelligence and the will to do



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are basic. Given these, specific details can be grasped with as they present themselves. Skills may be acquired through mutual love and sharing in the new way of life.

Attitudes Are All-important

OF THE three ingredients for satisfying marriage—skills, attitudes, and values—the last two are the most important. Homemaking skills are more easily taught and learned; attitudes and values develop gradually from infancy on up. They are derived from all the influences brought to bear on a child and all the experiences the child has had. Because living with parents, brothers, and sisters is the earliest, most intimate, and most constant experience a child goes through, attitudes and values are inevitably formed by these relationships and by the atmosphere in which the child grows up. School, neighborhood, and friends all add their influence, which in turn is tested out within the family.

It is difficult to separate the attitudes and values essential to readiness for marriage from those that contribute to personality growth in general. However, three aspects of development that are most important to successful marriage and are directly influenced by the family are these:

1. Experience with the opposite sex and learning how to get along with people who are different as well as with those who are alike. This experience comes first in relation to parents, brothers, and sisters. At the same time the family plays an important role through its attitudes toward the child's friends of the opposite sex and toward the way in which the child handles such relationships.

2. Healthy attitudes toward one's own body and acceptance of the fact that physical as well as spiritual sharing of affection is essential to a comfortable and satisfying marriage.

3. Emotional maturity. This means that a young person must *really* grow up—develop the ability to make choices, reach decisions independently and stick by them, and accept his or her own place as a boy or a girl in the family and outside it; to continue to love his parents but not to be overly dependent or overly hostile toward them; to expect that any job well done will mean difficulties to be overcome and adjustments to be made. The fairy prince and princess of youth's dream must become patient, cooperative, albeit joyous marriage partners.

Parents Are Living Illustrations

How important is it for parents to live an example of a happy marriage for their children? Very important in terms of values and standards. To a child family life may represent quarreling, conflict, impermanence, insecurity, and unhappiness, or it may represent warmth, comradeship, permanence, security, and happiness.

At the same time merely setting an example of a happy marriage is not the crux of the matter. The parents must be as warmly related to the child as they are to each other. The child must know where he fits into the family picture. He must have a sense of his importance and of his own role and status, yet he must also have certain responsibilities to his parents. His difficulties, resentments, and his natural anger toward the restriction of circumstances or persons in author-

ity should be accepted naturally by his parents as a part of healthy growth. If they take this attitude instead of denying him or punishing him severely, he will have an excellent chance of becoming an adequately rounded person with the ability to use his capacities to the full in marriage and a career.

In a home where there are warmth, sympathy, love, kindness, sharing, mutual responsibility and respect, consistency between parents, a spirit of give-and-take, trust, flexibility, tolerance, generosity, humor, naturalness, confidence, courage, and faith—there the attitudes and values most important to marriage are quite likely to develop. These same attitudes are essential in getting along with others, in adapting oneself to changing situations, and in doing satisfying and satisfactory work.

Happiness Must Be Made

VALUES and attitudes are closely related, and it is not easy to distinguish them. Readiness for marriage demands an ability to share joint values, not just selfish ones. The relationship of marriage itself should have a higher value than material things such as money, possessions, position, or success. Marriage should be a growing and expanding experience—one that broadens us but also requires continual growth on our own part.

Marriage is not, as superficial thinkers suppose, a solution to earlier maladjustment, a "happy ending" that carries no obligations. True readiness for marriage is based on a realistic understanding of what marriage *is*—of its sorrows as well as its joys—and an ability to find satisfaction through an intimate relationship with another person. This involves many adjustments, yet it can reward both husband and wife with the happiness that comes from the closest kind of sharing.

A person is happy with another person when he feels *comfortable*. When two persons find that they are not wishing for something outside but are pleased with what they have together, they have laid the cornerstone to happiness for themselves and their children. It is through such patterns of daily experience that we acquire the sense of unity and strength demanded for the survival of humanity in this mechanistic age.

See outline, questions, and reading references on page 37.

STUDY COURSES FOR 1949-50

Beginning with the September 1949 issue, the *National Parent-Teacher* will again present three parent education study courses. Each will deal with a certain period of child development, but all will be linked by the theme "Freedom To Grow"—of profound importance in the world of today. The director of the preschool study course will be announced next month. The course "Freedom To Grow in the Elementary School Years" will be directed by Ralph H. Ojemann and Eva H. Grant, and "Freedom To Grow in Adolescence" by Sidonie M. Gruenberg.

Baby Sets the Clock



© H. Armstrong Roberts

JOSEPHINE
HAYFORD

WHEN I think of my grandmother, who had twelve children and raised nine of them, it seems presumptuous for the mother of a mere three to be giving advice about raising children. If Grandmother had only kept charts she could have written this article with much more authority than I, but she was much too busy just raising babies and trying to keep them alive through summer complaint. She would have been distressed at the notion, so recently popular, that a baby is a clocklike mechanism to be forced into a schedule of absolute regularity from the moment of birth. She would have regarded it as a pity that we have needed years of work by men like Dr. Arnold Gesell of Yale to convince us of what to Grandmother was plain common sense: that a small baby is the best authority on how much he wants to eat and when.

My three children owe Dr. Gesell a greater debt of gratitude than they can ever fully realize. And I am rapidly becoming a nuisance in my zeal to convert others to the self-demand schedule. I justify my efforts by visualizing cribs full of contented, sleepy, delightful babies whose mamas may just possibly have been influenced by reading of my experiences.

It would be nice to delude myself with the idea that I am sensible enough to have arrived at the self-demand schedule under my own power. But I doubt it. I am sure there are many mothers like me—earnest young things who in pre-maternity days used to teach or type or sell, their acquaintance with babies being limited to occasional casual glances at a woman's magazine. Nine long months of plowing through the Visiting Nurses' reading list and conscientiously attending mothers' classes left me with a pretty good idea of how to change a diaper. But so little real confidence did I acquire that the day I was to leave the hospital with Charlie I bought the Sunday *New York Times* and spent the morning weeping behind it.

One Mother's Family

MY READING had taken me through Gesell's *The Feeding Behavior of Infants*, behavior-day charts and all; but somehow, scared as I was, I found it easier to follow the suggested schedule that the pediatrician sent home with us. At least I knew where I was. By the time we had been home a week everyone in the household was unhappy. Charlie was the unhappiest. He would waken an hour or so after each feeding and howl until the next; he was not gaining weight.

Pretty soon there came a day when he didn't sleep at all. I was still proud of him, because after all he was my son, but I was beginning to think that he had a naturally unpleasant disposition.

That evening a friend, whose son was a few weeks older than mine, came to call. To her the nature of the trouble was obvious. Her prompt advice was to reread *The Feeding Behavior of Infants*.

I did so, with poor Charlie's howls ringing through the house. At once a number of things became very clear. First, he was howling because he was hungry, not because he was a stubborn character who was consciously trying, at less than three weeks, to get the upper hand. I soon discovered that he had a very heavy appetite concentrated over a relatively short period of time. He required two full bottles of milk for breakfast. His total intake was only slightly higher than that proper for his age and weight according to the charts, but he wanted great quantities of nourishment at frequent intervals.

At twelve weeks the addition of a man-sized serving of cereal cut him down to a one-bottle demand, and he was quite happy to limit himself to three meals a day, provided he got as much as he wanted at each meal. Then he would settle in for fourteen hours of unbroken sleep, so deep that you could carry him up and down stairs without his opening an eye. For the first few days of the enlightened regime he was not quite sure that I really would fork over. There were as many as eight feedings on some of those days. But by the end of the week Charlie had settled down to a regular schedule of his own making. He ate heartily, slept soundly, gained phenomenally.

And so it went, very comfortably, through the whole first year. I proceeded on the assumption that Charlie's stomach knew best when it was empty and how much food was needed to fill it.

My other two, Ralph and Alison, have not had to suffer through those first days of hesitation. Even during the hectic time in the hospital I was able to make a beginning by nursing them as long as they would nurse, though I concealed the fact from obstetricians, pediatricians, and countless nursery nurses. It does wonders for the milk supply, to say nothing of the baby. But until the day when rooming-in arrangements are universal, the homecoming will continue to be the real beginning.

I expected—and got—a week or more of uncertainty, of not knowing whether a particular cry meant wet or hungry, whether sleepiness during a feeding indicated scarcity of milk or satiety. But

even before I understood all the baby's language I gave him his essential needs, food and physical comfort and affection, so promptly and effectively that we never walked the floor with a howling baby.

But except for the first week or so of confusion, feedings at all hours, and some weeping because Mama guessed wrong and administered milk instead of a clean diaper, life for the first year has been an easy, secure, relaxed affair for all three of my infants—and, in consequence, for me too.

Life as Baby Likes It

FOLLOWING the self-demand schedule means learning and respecting the baby's wishes in many ways. You find out whether he likes his milk warm or cool, his cereal runny or thick; whether he likes to sleep on his tummy or back, with a light or without. But the most important characteristic you must learn and respect is his tempo. A hatchet-faced cook who for all too long ruled my mother's kitchen once replied to my father's request for a bit more speed at breakfast, "You can't hurry an eight-minute egg!"

So when Alison pokes her tongue into the cereal to check on temperature and texture before she will accept the first bite, I remind myself that she is an eight-minute egg. She has her own timing and if I don't respect it she refuses to eat. Never in an unpleasant way, to be sure; she just doesn't eat. For her, every change in routine, every new experience, must be approached cautiously. She cuts out a feeding by stretching intervals, dropping the feeding for a day or two, going back to the old schedule, and so on for as much as a month before she finally adjusts from five feedings to four. Any attempt to hurry her changes her into an unhappy baby who sleeps restlessly and gains no weight.

Charlie was the opposite. He has from birth been as avid for new experience as for food. He wants variety of taste and scenery. To this day even his favorite dish will bore him if I serve it twice in the same week. When he dropped a feeding he just dropped it. One night he woke up at ten o'clock, the next night he didn't, and that was that.

Ralph is not suspicious of new experience, as Alison is, but he is slow in tempo and refuses to

OF ALL the problems that hover over the young mother's head, none are more vexing than those connected with infant feeding. For baby's meals, like those of his elders, have a certain social as well as nutritional importance. On their satisfactory timing much depends. Such, at least, is the view of the writer who here speaks her mind with conviction.

do things until he can do them by himself. When he dropped a feeding, he woke earlier and earlier until, usually in less than a week, the two feedings had merged into one.

In the past few years I have frequently been forced by skeptical relatives and neighbors to defend my theories, and especially to demonstrate that they are practical. Some say, "Doesn't the baby *need* regularity if he is to feel secure?" It is my experience that for a baby time itself has little significance, but the sequence of events has much. The bath follows the orange juice, and the walk follows the bonnet—or else! And it is obvious that a baby has a much deeper sense of security if his hunger cry is answered promptly than he does if he has to wail through an endless hour to get his bottle.

Objections Overruled

ANOTHER frequent question is, "How can you run your household without a schedule? Don't you go mad, never knowing when anything is going to happen?" The self-demand schedule is as easy to work with as the rigid four-hour schedule. In fact it is easier, because there is no nerve-racking business of going about gritting your teeth while the baby howls it out until the clock says two, or else giving in against your better judgment and feeling guilty because you are spoiling the baby.

Actually, after the first week or so, which you spend learning how your baby functions and which the baby spends adjusting to his new situation, you *do* know what is going to happen. And since you are running a household, not conducting a scientific experiment, you soon find that if necessary (as it often is when there are older children) you can work the baby a little this way or that to fit in with the needs of the household. Besides, I never could see that the beds suffered any if once in a while they had to wait until after the baby's bath.

An objection that particularly irritates me is that by catering thus to the baby's so-called whims you are spoiling him and letting him get the upper hand. It is roughly a year before he has any notion of himself, or his mother, as an individual, and even longer before he can conceive of upper hands. In the meantime there are all the months of infancy during which we impose on him a host of restrictions—dry diapers, play pens, food from a spoon. If at the same time we fail to satisfy promptly his really basic needs for food and af-

fection, we are just asking for problem children. A baby cries because he needs something, and letting him cry it out will only confirm him in the habit of howling. At least I am so convinced. All I know is that I attended to my infants promptly when they cried, and they never cried much. In fact, it was not until Ralph was four months old and bumped his head that I heard him really howl.

The Drama of Child Care

AFURTHER objection that I have had to meet was first made to me by a bewildered new father. He pointed out that the real difficulty of raising a baby on the self-demand schedule is that you have to think about what you are doing. In the Golden Age of mechanistic child care all you had to do was follow to the letter the schedule your pediatrician handed to you. But under this new dispensation you cannot rely on the clock to tell you what to do. You have to observe your child, learn the meaning of different kinds of behavior, exercise judgment a dozen times a day, each time taking the chance of going wrong. And I must confess there have been times when I have wished desperately that someone would just tell me what to do.

But the first time you see your new baby you realize how different he is from any other baby that ever was, and you want to know him and find out what makes him tick. I think I am very lucky to have found a system of child care based on the simple and pleasant job of getting thoroughly acquainted with the young one. I am very glad that I was never forced to regard my three babies as little machines who should be left ticking away in their cribs until they exploded into antisocial strangers, complete with complexes. It has not been just my good luck to have three good babies, babies who didn't cry and were never feeding problems. I am sure it is because from the beginning, using the self-demand feeding schedule and turning frequently to the growth studies for help in interpreting behavior, I treated each child as an individual having his own needs and his own rights.

How they will turn out I don't know. That's a long way off. Already they have their small problems. But disinterested authorities tell me that they are bright and healthy, noisy but obedient, assured but not unpleasantly aggressive. And I think that if Dr. Gesell were ever to need them I should be more than pleased to send them along as testimonials.

A baby is an angel whose wings decrease as his legs increase.—FRENCH PROVERB

IT DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN!

RONALD C. DOLL

JOHNIE has failed again!" The words are familiar to many parents. They imply tragedy, questioning, and recrimination. No one likes to fail, or to see his loved ones fail, in the things that matter most. For Americans, who have great faith in education, one of the things that matter most is schoolwork.

It is said that nothing succeeds like success; it is equally true that nothing fails like failure. Psychologists tell us that the sinking, numbing sensation associated with one failure often sets the stage for additional failures. Children, because of their limited experience, are seriously affected by such tragedies.

Some students are crushed by failure; others are so slow-moving that the sudden shock of failure seems to jar them into action. Still others apparently do their very best but seem fated to fail. Toward these the modern, civilized attitude is sympathetic.

Partly because of this attitude educators have recently been restudying the causes of failure in school. Formerly children who could not or did not learn what parents and teachers expected them to learn were branded "dumb." Causes other than lack of mental ability went unheeded. Formerly, too, children were all put through the same elementary-school paces, and those who went to high school had their minds "disciplined" by the same or similar subjects. In-

evitably, a great number of them fell by the way-side simply because their individual differences were not considered seriously. Nobody regarded failure as a possible symptom of undesirable conditions in the child's life.

Fear and Frustration

GUIDANCE workers and psychologists still know too little about children and their problems to list the causes of school failure in neat one-two-three order. They do realize, however, that these causes may now be identified more often and more clearly than ever before and that they can and should be interpreted to the public.

One important cause is emotional disturbance. Fear, resentment, or insecurity may arise from a simple, easily resolved circumstance, but sometimes it has its roots in life conditions that would stagger the average adult.

Fifteen-year-old Mary came to her public school guidance counselor beset on every side by fears. She feared for the mental health of her father, who had once spent several months in a hospital for the insane. She feared her mother, who was brutal to her and her younger brother. She was afraid that her sister was falling prey to an incurable disease. She wondered whether the



WHEN a child fails in school, there is still a tendency to blame him. Yet few failures are due to sloth or stupidity, and the sooner parents realize this, the better. The author of this article faces the facts and sets them clearly in order, thereby challenging parents and teachers to examine the problem anew and to solve it together.

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ANOTHER frequent question is, "How can you run your household without a schedule? Don't you go mad, never knowing when anything is going to happen?" The self-demand schedule is as easy to work with as the rigid four-hour schedule. In fact it is easier, because there is no nerve-racking business of going about gritting your teeth while the baby howls it out until the clock says two, or else giving in against your better judgment and feeling guilty because you are spoiling the baby.

Actually, after the first week or so, which you spend learning how your baby functions and which the baby spends adjusting to his new situation, you *do* know what is going to happen. And since you are running a household, not conducting a scientific experiment, you soon find that if necessary (as it often is when there are older children) you can work the baby a little this way or that to fit in with the needs of the household. Besides, I never could see that the beds suffered any if once in a while they had to wait until after the baby's bath.

An objection that particularly irritates me is that by catering thus to the baby's so-called whims you are spoiling him and letting him get the upper hand. It is roughly a year before he has any notion of himself, or his mother, as an individual, and even longer before he can conceive of upper hands. In the meantime there are all the months of infancy during which we impose on him a host of restrictions—dry diapers, play pens, food from a spoon. If at the same time we fail to satisfy promptly his really basic needs for food and af-

fection, we are just asking for problem children. A baby cries because he needs something, and letting him cry it out will only confirm him in the habit of howling. At least I am so convinced. All I know is that I attended to my infants promptly when they cried, and they never cried much. In fact, it was not until Ralph was four months old and bumped his head that I heard him really howl.

The Drama of Child Care

AFURTHER objection that I have had to meet was first made to me by a bewildered new father. He pointed out that the real difficulty of raising a baby on the self-demand schedule is that you have to think about what you are doing. In the Golden Age of mechanistic child care all you had to do was follow to the letter the schedule your pediatrician handed to you. But under this new dispensation you cannot rely on the clock to tell you what to do. You have to observe your child, learn the meaning of different kinds of behavior, exercise judgment a dozen times a day, each time taking the chance of going wrong. And I must confess there have been times when I have wished desperately that someone would just tell me what to do.

But the first time you see your new baby you realize how different he is from any other baby that ever was, and you want to know him and find out what makes him tick. I think I am very lucky to have found a system of child care based on the simple and pleasant job of getting thoroughly acquainted with the young one. I am very glad that I was never forced to regard my three babies as little machines who should be left ticking away in their cribs until they exploded into antisocial strangers, complete with complexes. It has not been just my good luck to have three good babies, babies who didn't cry and were never feeding problems. I am sure it is because from the beginning, using the self-demand feeding schedule and turning frequently to the growth studies for help in interpreting behavior, I treated each child as an individual having his own needs and his own rights.

How they will turn out I don't know. That's a long way off. Already they have their small problems. But disinterested authorities tell me that they are bright and healthy, noisy but obedient, assured but not unpleasantly aggressive. And I think that if Dr. Gesell were ever to need them I should be more than pleased to send them along as testimonials.

A baby is an angel whose wings decrease as his legs increase.—FRENCH PROVERB

IT DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN!

RONALD C. DOLL

JOHNNIE has failed again!" The words are familiar to many parents. They imply tragedy, questioning, and recrimination. No one likes to fail, or to see his loved ones fail, in the things that matter most. For Americans, who have great faith in education, one of the things that matter most is schoolwork.

It is said that nothing succeeds like success; it is equally true that nothing fails like failure. Psychologists tell us that the sinking, numbing sensation associated with one failure often sets the stage for additional failures. Children, because of their limited experience, are seriously affected by such tragedies.

Some students are crushed by failure; others are so slow-moving that the sudden shock of failure seems to jar them into action. Still others apparently do their very best but seem fated to fail. Toward these the modern, civilized attitude is sympathetic.

Partly because of this attitude educators have recently been restudying the causes of failure in school. Formerly children who could not or did not learn what parents and teachers expected them to learn were branded "dumb." Causes other than lack of mental ability went unheeded. Formerly, too, children were all put through the same elementary-school paces, and those who went to high school had their minds "disciplined" by the same or similar subjects. In-

evitably, a great number of them fell by the way-side simply because their individual differences were not considered seriously. Nobody regarded failure as a possible symptom of undesirable conditions in the child's life.

Fear and Frustration

GUIDANCE workers and psychologists still know too little about children and their problems to list the causes of school failure in neat one-two-three order. They do realize, however, that these causes may now be identified more often and more clearly than ever before and that they can and should be interpreted to the public.

One important cause is emotional disturbance. Fear, resentment, or insecurity may arise from a simple, easily resolved circumstance, but sometimes it has its roots in life conditions that would stagger the average adult.

Fifteen-year-old Mary came to her public school guidance counselor beset on every side by fears. She feared for the mental health of her father, who had once spent several months in a hospital for the insane. She feared her mother, who was brutal to her and her younger brother. She was afraid that her sister was falling prey to an incurable disease. She wondered whether the



WHEN a child fails in school, there is still a tendency to blame him. Yet few failures are due to sloth or stupidity, and the sooner parents realize this, the better. The author of this article faces the facts and sets them clearly in order, thereby challenging parents and teachers to examine the problem anew and to solve it together.

young lad she hoped to marry, whose parents were deaf mutes, might transmit the family handicap to her children. Finally, she was afraid that her own frail health might break.

Such worries as these are usually confined to adults, but more and more children in our schools today are subject to them. Many others, of course, are afflicted with the usual emotional upsets of adolescence. Sometimes an adolescent who has always maintained a good school record is suddenly caught in the doldrums.

John, aged fifteen, was a sophomore in high school. He had earned good marks in elementary school, and his ratings on mental ability tests were high. He had no serious physical defects. He got along well with parents and teachers, and he had a reputation for industry and reliability. Suddenly he stopped working. When his parents and teachers began asking what troubled him, John could not or would not tell. He admitted having no particular goal or purpose in life, and he just enjoyed daydreaming.

John's case is not unusual. It represents the mental situation of numerous adolescents, both boys and girls. But obviously when this situation is complicated by external fears, doubts, and uncertainties, it inhibits school achievement very seriously.

Closely related to emotional disturbance as a cause of failure are unfortunate conditions in the child's home or neighborhood.

Recently a high school boy walked into a counselor's office and dropped dejectedly into a chair.

"What's the matter, Sam?" the counselor asked.

"Well," said Sam, "I can't seem to please the teachers any more. My marks used to be good, but now I'm in a slump. The big trouble is that I can't study."

"Why not?"

"It isn't that I can't concentrate, but where I live they just never let a fellow alone."

The counselor knew that Sam's father and mother had separated and that the boy and his younger brother were living with a neighbor's family. This family, consisting of two adults and three children ranging in age from four to nineteen, lived in a four-room house. Sleeping accommodations were "doubled up," and private places for study were unheard of. Naturally the commotion in the household proved disturbing.

Of course, one cannot altogether disregard the possibility of dullness. Obviously some children are dull. Among the dull ones there is a minority of idiots, imbeciles, and morons, but this minority is so small and its members

are so frequently cared for at home and in institutions that it should not become an impediment to the schools. It is safe to say that more than 99 per cent of the children in an average American community are capable of being educated, at least to some extent.

The Slow-paced Mind

LACK of sufficient mental ability remains nevertheless one of the major causes of failure in school. This is not surprising when one realizes that much of the subject matter taught there is abstract, indefinite, and unrelated to life as the pupil knows it. Children of low mental ability are left with but two alternatives: to leave school as soon as the law permits and thereby escape from tasks in which they cannot succeed, or to remain in school and meet with defeat after defeat until eventually they are promoted or graduated "on age."

Americans have been called the most illiterate literate people in the world. Though they have been taught to read, many do not exercise their skill well enough or often enough to be considered good readers. Tests of reading ability reveal an amazing number of pupils who cannot read well. Parents often complain that the schools have failed in their choice and application of teaching methods, and in some instances their complaints are undoubtedly justified.

Research, however, has revealed certain other causes. The young child is often not ready to read when adults thrust the obligation upon him. Sometimes he has little interest in the reading matter and therefore refuses to practice the few reading skills he has acquired. He may do well at first only to discover later that his vocabulary is too limited to enable him to understand advanced material.



© Monkmeyer-Belmont

Occasionally, from the beginning of his reading career, the child's eye movements have been faulty.

Certain children, too, lack aptitude for particular school subjects. As a prominent educator has said, a child may be a leader in one situation but a follower in another, a ready speaker but an unaggressive fighter, a good student of English but poor in arithmetic. Even a brilliant youngster may find himself in difficulty with a special subject, such as algebra or foreign languages or European history.

Irresponsibility and Failure

STILL another consideration in the problem of failure is inability or unwillingness to accept responsibility. Students of life in the farming districts have reported that a strong sense of responsibility is found more commonly among rural than among city children. Even in a machine-age atmosphere, farm boys and girls usually have certain chores to do that are regarded as absolute obligations. In city and suburban homes children are not inclined to take seriously the few make-shift responsibilities left them by the grocer's delivery boy, the garbage collector, the apartment house superintendent, the mechanical stoker, or the housemaid. They collect their weekly allowance without any appreciable expenditure of sweat or anguish. The mother who moans "I do wish Lucy wouldn't leave her stockings on the floor and her best dresses draped across chairs!" apparently does not realize that Lucy's lack of tidiness and consideration is due wholly to a lack of the necessary training.

Both parents and teachers are guilty of such neglect. Only recently have teachers begun to discover the many potentialities of children, and that discovery has come about through letting pupils assume obligations for which they were formerly considered too immature. If indeed man is a bundle of habits, the habits that young people form in one environment are likely to go with them to the next.

Children in whom no fires of enthusiasm can be kindled may be suffering from physical or mental defects and illnesses, which cause a great many failures. Draft rejection figures during two world wars have awakened parents and teachers to hard reality. According to public health experts, thousands of American children are handicapped by impaired vision and hearing, infected tonsils, glandular difficulties, decayed teeth, spinal curvature, and nervous and mental disorders. Each year sixty thousand children are born with congenital syphilis.

Surveys conducted by the U.S. Public Health Service at Hagerstown, Maryland, showed the

average child is absent from school because of illness for seven out of a possible one hundred and eighty days a year. As for types of illness, the surveys confirmed what parents already know: colds, grippe, sore throat, measles, mumps, digestive upsets, whooping cough, headache, accidents, dental defects, chicken pox, and diseases or defects of the eyes and ears.

Undeniably physical defects and illnesses lead to scholastic inefficiency. The child who feels only "half there" can hardly be expected to maintain mental alertness.

Understanding Individual Needs

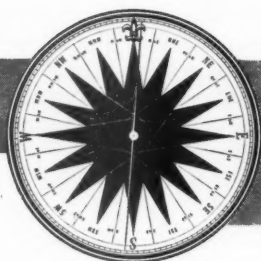
A FINAL but important cause of school failure is the unwillingness of the schools themselves to adjust their teaching to the needs of children. Some experts are convinced that this is the main cause. They believe that many teachers fail to take into account new conditions, new times, and new groups of children who represent wide ranges of ability and background. It is possible that a too-conservative attitude on the part of educators may do more harm than is done by the few "ultra progressives" on our teaching staffs, for the all-out conservative is frequently an inhibitor of true development.

The pupils of such a person too often spend their time studying the teacher instead of the lessons, to determine what she wants them to do. They give the lessons enough attention to pass and promptly forget most of what they have learned. Thus the whole process has to be repeated not once but many times.

Fortunately many teachers and some parents have discovered the waste and failure in this sort of treadmill education, and they look forward to the day when all school procedures will be based on the valid findings of modern research.

Meanwhile the best teachers are beginning to see in each failing pupil a precious and complex personality on whom many pressures are operating. Often they can identify these pressures and do something to relieve them. But the most understanding teacher may be thwarted in his efforts if he does not have the full cooperation of interested parents.

Today it is possible to obtain special attention for a child's individual problems. Not every community can afford to employ guidance counselors and psychologists, but most of them have certain wise and sympathetic teachers and principals who can dispense the new knowledge of children's interests and needs. The problem child is, after all, just a child with a problem, and most problems are capable of solution if home and school work intelligently together.



If I Were a Local Magazine Chairman

ELIZABETH B. HILL

President, National Parent-Teacher Magazine



Mrs. James Fitts Hill

IN THOUSANDS of American homes the Magazine chairmen of local P.T.A.'s are known as friends of the family. They won that title by introducing all members of the household to a trustworthy source of good counsel exactly suited to their needs. I mean, of course, *National Parent-Teacher: The P.T.A. Magazine*.

There is a direct connection between the expanding circulation of our Magazine and the growing number of thoughtful men and women everywhere who are seeking to build better for themselves, their families, and their communities. More and more Americans, turning to the *National Parent-Teacher* for guidance, are finding that it provides them with the kind of help they can get nowhere else. Magazine chairmen are in a position to see this happening every day. Little wonder, then, that these parent-teacher workers bring to their job abundant enthusiasm and steadfast belief in its worth-whileness.

Yet belief and enthusiasm, splendid as they are, are not enough. Magazine chairmen also need explicit knowledge of how best to go about their task. To put the experience and insight of the expert at the service of the reader is the function of the Magazine. But to see that the Magazine reaches the greatest possible number of men and women inside and outside the parent-teacher organization—that is the function of the Magazine chairman.

If, therefore, I were a local chairman, I should ask myself what specific knowledge I must have. Clearly, knowledge of the Magazine would be of first importance. I should study it with a keen eye, from its attractive front cover to its informative back cover. The national president's monthly message, the timely articles by recognized authorities on child development and parent education, the regular departments in which other experts apply their specialized skills to the unraveling of specific problems, the parent education study courses, the guides to better books, movies, and radio programs—these and other features in every number serve a variety of tastes and interests, yet each one is centered on the child.

It would not take me long, either, to discover that some

of my ablest assistants would be the pleased subscribers who talk about this article or that in last month's issue and who tell their neighbors to be sure to read this or that particular author on this or that topic.

Let me assume that I am a local Magazine chairman. How am I going to bring my knowledge of the Magazine to bear on the strategic problem of getting it into other people's homes and onto their reading tables? Fortunately a packet of promotional materials from the National Office will help me. It is filled with suggestions that have proved successful in thousands of P.T.A.'s similar to mine. From my state or council Magazine chairman I will also receive pertinent information from the current *Promotion News*, a national publication that contains useful facts and lively suggestions about Magazine promotion over the country.

Most thumbed of all my references, however, will be the latest edition of the *Parent-Teacher Manual*, which has a section devoted to practical techniques and devices for Magazine committees. Following the recommendations in this section, I shall develop a plan of work to cover the whole year, taking into account, of course, the suggestions of my state chairman.

In carrying out the plan, I shall obviously need to have more than a road-map acquaintance with my home town, and the P.T.A. makes the best starting point for an inventory. If I do not already know all the members, I shall promptly introduce myself.

Turning next to the community at large, I might ask myself, for a beginning, what families on my own street have children or have lively concern for other people's children? How many doctors and dentists have offices in the neighborhood? Do they all know about the Magazine, and do they keep copies of it in their waiting rooms? What of the beauty shops, where women spend hours looking over fashion and movie magazines? Why not let them get acquainted with the *National Parent-Teacher*? And what of the clergymen? Are they familiar with our Magazine? What of the public library? The school library? Of course, the principal and teachers know about the Magazine—or do they? I had better make sure.

Sometimes, in the understandable ambition to obtain

the largest possible number of new subscriptions, a Magazine chairman may forget that he has a continuing responsibility. I shall make it a good-will policy to keep track of the time each subscription will expire and shall drop a post card or, better still, make a personal telephone call to the subscriber at that time

Smoothing the Way

THIS is but one example of how the good local Magazine chairman must have constant forethought in little things. There is also the importance of a friendly and approachable manner. I am thinking now of Magazine chairmen I have known personally. The best ones are always the easiest to talk to. Certainly a good part of their success is due to their knack for making it easy for people to subscribe!

This particular knack means having all the necessary tools handy—such things as subscription blanks, receipt forms, pencils, and change. Most important of all, it means always having a recent copy of the Magazine under my arm. Nothing kills interest more quickly than to have a chairman fumble and apologize for makeshift arrangements—as if he had not expected to be taken seriously!

I shall also arrange to answer questions and “talk Magazine” at a definite time and place during every meeting. A table and chair near the door, perhaps, and a brief announcement from the floor should serve the purpose. In short, I should see that reference to the Magazine becomes as much a part of the business of every meeting as is the reading of the minutes.

Right here I must take time to think seriously about which features of the Magazine I would emphasize to potential subscribers. Of course I realize that people may be interested in it for different reasons. Each one will want help in meeting a particular problem. Mrs. Johnson, for example, has a boy of ten and a girl of thirteen, whereas young Mrs. Bosco's first baby has not yet begun to walk. Men and women, parents and teachers—all of them have concern for the child, but from how many varied points of view!

It is impossible in this short article to do justice to that very important feature of our official Magazine, the parent education study courses. The *National Parent-Teacher* publishes sound material carefully tailored to meet the requirements of parents of children at all age levels: preschool, elementary school, and adolescent. For study and discussion groups the parent education programs serve as an inexpensive yet incomparable textbook. In addition to the study courses there are articles on adult education that cannot fail to give men and women a deeper understanding of themselves and the creative role they can play as mature citizens of a maturing democracy.

The Magazine chairman, even if he works entirely alone, represents an integral committee of the P.T.A., and his work should fit purposefully into the year's total program. At an early fall meeting I should be given an opportunity to enlist the support and cooperation of the entire membership by explaining to them what the Magazine means to the success of parent-teacher work in all fields. This is the time to mention the fact that the *National Congress Bulletin* publishes the name of every local association that has fifty or more Magazine subscribers. It is very

satisfying to see the name of one's association on this national honor roll. As in starting a savings account, the first fifty subscriptions are the hardest!

I should stress, too, on this particular occasion, that the cooperation of our P.T.A. is needed if our state congress is to win a coveted honor plaque with gold stars at the national convention in the spring. And, of course, I should remind myself to become thoroughly familiar with all the important details connected with these awards. For awards by no means merely crown a successful subscription campaign. In a larger sense they are an acknowledgment of distinguished service in the interest of one of our most essential aims—education for parenthood and family life.

Taking the Long View

SO MUCH for subscriptions. I shall be just as much interested in demonstrating the Magazine's all-round usefulness as a tool. Always on the alert to be of service, I shall make a point of bringing pertinent articles to the attention of the appropriate committee chairmen, and when an outside speaker is scheduled I shall be prepared with supplementary references bearing on his theme. Mindful that posters always attract attention, I shall utilize old copies of the Magazine to highlight this project or that in poster form. If necessary, I can recruit teen-age artists to help me. Exhibits and Jiffyskits, games and contests—there are innumerable ways to combine fun with the serious business of promoting the *National Parent-Teacher*.

For as long as I served as local Magazine chairman, I should try never to lose sight of the fact that my work was important work to the world. Some there are who may stand in the pulpit and give spiritual comfort and direction to others. Some may preside over a classroom and show young minds the way to grow. Still others may speak into a microphone and sway multitudes they will never see. But not all of us are called to pulpit or classroom. Not all have the gifts or the opportunity for speaking into microphones. Yet for us, too, there is work to be done that is well worth doing. Our work is to spread the good word. It is to bring the knowledge of things worth knowing to those who, but for us, might never know them.

All of us have known rainy days—those days when we questioned the value of our personal contribution to the building of a better world. But there need be no rainy days for us if we have a true appreciation of our vital function. We shall instead be sustained at all times and carried forward by that faith and enthusiasm to which I referred in my opening paragraphs.

Our rewards are intangible but real. Does the man who plants an acorn begrudge his labor because he may never see the oak tree in its prime? On the contrary, he feels well paid in the proud knowledge that without his intervention there would be no oak tree. So it is with Magazine chairmen. Our work is comparable to his. The welfare of children cannot wait. Their needs must be met today. It is therefore the privilege, as it is also the responsibility, of the local Magazine chairmen to act the part of true friends and make known to every American family the source of the best thinking about today's child, his needs, and his world-in-the-making.



H. B. McCARTY

*National Chairman, Committee on Radio
Director, Radio Station WHA, University of Wisconsin*

A FAMILY living in my home town just got back from the Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Wonderful trip, much fun—and not a cent of expense. Radio paid the bills! And that's not all. The Mardi Gras excursion was just part of the big jack pot that is still pouring out its treasures—all because my fellow townsman got a telephone call and happened to know the name of a certain tune one Sunday night several weeks ago. It's nice when good fortune falls to folks you know.

But I keep wondering about two things. I wonder about the millions of people who listen week after week, who sit on the edge of their chairs, waiting with heart-pounding tension for the ring of the telephone. I wonder how they feel when an outsider walks off with all the winnings. For, you see, my neighbor had never before listened to that particular program. He had been spared all those weeks of anxiety. And he listened on that certain night only because a telephone operator in New York City called in advance to tell him that his name had been drawn and advised him to tune in and wait for a second call.

Then I wonder about the advertiser. I wonder if he's getting his money's worth. For amidst the celebration here in Madison that Sunday evening, someone asked about the advertiser, and no one remembered who it was!

That kind of radio is, if you will pardon the expression, slightly cockeyed.

The discriminating listener will surely realize that radio cannot live, thrive, and improve on guessing games, giveaways, and chance. Let's hope that all those who sense the danger—and that includes many leaders in the radio industry itself—can quickly spread their concern to the millions of radio listeners who anxiously wait for a telephone call instead of seeking a genuinely rewarding program. There's a job for the listener groups, the radio councils, and the teachers who are endeavoring to help listeners set higher standards.

Some observers have likened the present jack-pot stage in radio to the free-dishes era in the movies. Remember when a set of china was the chief inducement to moviegoers? That cycle ended. No doubt this one will also, but the radio listener himself can help to speed the day.

Have You Heard . . . ?

LISTENERS who still ask "Whatever happened to *Information Please*?" are finding a suitable substitute these days. It's *Who Said That?*—a delightful quiz program that began as a filler last summer and is steadily growing in stature. It's good fun first of all, and it provides a game the whole family can play. Bob Trout, radio's top ad-libber, serves as master of ceremonies and calls on a panel of experts to identify statements made by people who have appeared in the news the previous week. In addition to names and events, the listener gets a good deal of spontaneous and enjoyable comment and conversation from the panel members. NBC, Sundays at 10:30 p.m., EST.

In the field of radio drama several programs deserve the highest rating. One of these is surely *Theatre Guild on the Air*, cited by the National Council of Teachers of English last year as the program doing most "to further listeners' understanding and appreciation of our literary heritage." ABC, Sundays at 9:30 p.m., EST.

Thoroughly enjoyable and significant drama productions are also heard on the *NBC University Theatre*, Sundays at 2:30 p.m., EST. This series is helping to popularize the idea of going to college at home by radio, an idea that for years has characterized the service of stations operated by the state universities in Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and elsewhere. Through a special arrangement with several universities many listeners to the *NBC University Theatre* are now earning college credit in literature. There are similar opportunities in music and economics. For details write to Sterling Fisher, National Broadcasting Company, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, New York.

Does your local CBS station carry the series *You and . . .* (such as *You and Atomic Energy*, *You and the Law*)? If not, you're missing some extremely informative and timely programs. They're given at 6:15 p.m., EST, daily from Monday through Friday, which is a good time for local commercials and explains why many stations omit the series. Most stations, however, would gladly record the programs for presentation at another time if enough listeners expressed their interest.

Power of the Penny Postal Card

BEST bargain I know is the penny postal card. It carries a listener's comments and suggestions to a radio program director or advertising manager. It generally gets attention and often gets results. I've known a postal card to alter a program policy and even start a whole new series, for no station or advertiser can afford to ignore an intelligent opinion honestly expressed. Keep a pack of penny postal cards near your radio, and use them often.

Monthly Guide to Good Listening

AN EXCELLENT listing of selected programs is published each month in the *Scholastic Teacher*. Recommendations cover programs for children and adults and are made by a panel of specialists representing the Federal Radio Education Committee.

PTA Frontiers



Newark Cleans Up Its Newsstands

THE activities of your committee have resulted in an appreciable decline in the circulation of my client's publications in your area." Thomas F. McHugh, assistant superintendent of the public schools in Newark, New Jersey, smiled as he finished reading aloud from the lawyer's letter. He looked around the table at the faces of his fellow members of the Newark Clean Literature Committee. On his right the Essex County P.T.A. juvenile protection chairman and the Newark P.T.A. district chairman were exchanging pleased glances. A lieutenant of the police department was smiling broadly. Beside him, the representative of the Newark Welfare Council and her neighbor, a young rabbi, were shaking hands in mutual congratulation. At his left the secretary of the Newark Council of Churches



Mrs. Horace J. Brogley
President
New Jersey Congress

spoke a decisive "Hurrah!" The Roman Catholic priest at the end of the table nodded his head approvingly.

The chairman of the meeting, vice-president of the Essex County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations, remembered a blistering July day, several months before, when she had visited the office of the welfare council in response to a plea from the council's group work secretary.

"Mrs. Leon," the secretary had said, "look at these magazines. Did you know they are on sale at newsstands all over Newark? And that children can—and do—buy them? This looks like a job for the P.T.A.'s."

That had been the beginning of the Newark Clean Literature Committee and its continuing fight against objectionable comics, magazines, and pamphlets. Shocked that such an epidemic—far worse than scarlet fever—should rage in a city where the physical health of children was jealously guarded, the county council president and board of managers had turned their wholehearted attention to the problem. At their direction Mrs. Leon had alerted all P.T.A.'s to the task of ridding the city of this menace to its children.

The months of work that followed were now producing results. The letter that Mr. McHugh had just read was only one of many. Another, from the publisher of an "arty" magazine, asked for reconsideration of his banned publication. Still another publisher, launching a new periodical, wrote to inquire whether it would be worth his while to consign it to the Newark stands.

No wonder the committee felt a high sense of



© George Van

Three members of the Newark Clean Literature Committee pause from their labors long enough to be photographed with the placard they present to news dealers who do not sell or display objectionable publications. From left to right: Thomas F. McHugh, assistant superintendent of public schools in Newark, New Jersey; Mrs. Margaret O'Reilly, chairman of the committee on juvenile protection, Essex County Council of Parent-Teacher Associations; and Mrs. Benjamin S. Leon, vice-president of the Essex County Council and state Magazine chairman.

accomplishment. The work that remained for them to do was, of course, considerable. But they could look back with a feeling of real satisfaction at what they had already achieved.

Nightmares for Sale

IT BEGAN when two P.T.A.'s were asked to make a survey to determine where and how many undesirable publications were on sale locally. The survey revealed that shops and newsstands were literally flooded with reading material that could produce only bad effects on young people. Three hundred different magazines of an offensive nature were being sold at the rate of sixty million copies every month, and nine out of ten Newark youngsters were reading them.

Since this material was not technically obscene in the eyes of the law, it could not be withdrawn by injunction. The real responsibility for the sale of objectionable literature lies with the publisher and his distributor, who often subject the news dealer to an arrangement known as a "package deal." This requires the dealer to take from the distributor a certain number of trashy magazines if he wants the popular and respected weeklies and monthlies.

Such a situation could only be fought by arousing public opinion to boycott pitch, in order to strike where the publisher would feel it most—in his pocketbook. That demanded city-wide action. Mass meetings were held, attended by members of all thirty-one Newark P.T.A.'s and their county leaders, the superintendent of schools, school principals, and representatives of the police department, the welfare council, and various religious faiths. The director of public safety, who had been on the point of forming a similar committee, joined his forces with those of the schools and the P.T.A.'s.

An impressive campaign was mapped out. Since the elementary school districts cover the entire city, they became the units of organization. Each school principal was made chairman of his district committee, which might have anywhere from nine to twenty members—all P.T.A. parents and representatives of the religious faiths in the school area.

Each committee member became a fieldworker. Armed with his district map, he visited every newsstand, delicatessen, confectionery shop, and lobby where reading matter was displayed. Working in pairs, committee members called on the proprietors, explained the purpose of the campaign, and asked for a refusal to sell or display objectionable publications. At the same time, they made notes of any such publications that were on display.

They Made a Little List

THE names of the objectionable publications were relayed to the executive committee, and a list was compiled to which the fieldworkers could refer. In order for a magazine to qualify for the dubious distinction of being placed on the list, it had to get seven out of the ten votes of the executive committee. The voting followed an appraisal in terms of these characteristics:

- Glorification of crime and the criminal
- Offensive treatment of sex
- Emphasis on illicit love
- Indecent or suggestive pictures
- Objectionable advertising

For obvious reasons the list was not made public. It was used only as a guide for fieldworkers, who told dealers which publications were considered harmful to children and asked that they keep them off display and out of sale. A dealer who agreed to cooperate received the committee's official placard for display in his store or stand.

Meanwhile in the newspapers, over the radio, and in letters to parents, the story of the committee's work was spreading. "Rouse yourselves, parents! Know what your children are reading. Guard their mental and emotional health as you do their physical well-being." This was the message, combined with a strong appeal for a boycott of places that continued to sell offensive material.

The project is of course a continuing one. District committee members make the neighborhood rounds on monthly visits, carefully checking every publication on the stands. Occasionally a publisher will change the title but not the contents of an obscene magazine. Evasions like this have to be uncovered and fought.

More than two thirds of Newark's seven hundred newsstands, however, have quietly removed the objectionable material from their shelves; nearly two hundred of them display the committee's placard with its shield and signed pledge.

Because Essex County is a metropolitan area of closely built suburban communities surrounding Newark, the committee has counted the interest of these neighboring communities essential to complete success. Members of the executive committee have kept speaking engagements and have helped in the work of West Orange, Montclair, and Caldwell committees, who are now undertaking similar campaigns. Other communities are beginning to follow suit. To those who inquire, the Newark group is glad to send a careful, step-by-step story of its procedure, with samples of the placard, the letters to parents, and a reminder poster contributed by a member of the Citizens Committee on Juvenile Protection.

—**MARIAN H. SCHNEIDER** and **ROSALIE L. LEON**



BOOKS in Review

THE HOOGLS AND ALEXANDER. By Dorothy Langley. Illustrated by Cecil Smith. Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1949. \$3.00.

IT WAS on a windy night seven years ago that Maria, Professor Lane's wife, gave birth to twins. Now Penny and Pete would have been darlings even if each of them did not have on the left temple a tiny, seven-pointed, pale-silver star. Professor Lane tried hard to rub off the stars—they are not at all the proper things to wear, of course—but still they shone with a brilliance nothing could remove. How could it be otherwise, since they had been put there by Alexander, the wisest and kindest rabbit that ever inhabited an enchanted forest?

To this day neither Maria nor the Professor really knows how Alexander entered the room where the twins lay sleeping. They only know that he promised to return on the twins' seventh birthday. And return he does, to take Penny and Pete on a fabulous journey through the misty and enchanted forest of the Traumwald, where only children with silver stars on their foreheads—all Hoogles, in other words—are allowed to enter.

Penny and Pete quickly learn that the creatures who live in the Traumwald are very like the people of their own unenchanted world. There are, for instance, the Elf Who Must Always Be Looking for Something; the gentle snail who never ceases to be grateful for the amethyst earrings; Wilf the Wicked, who hides a soft heart behind a ferocious growl; the cuckoos, who live in clocks as all right-minded cuckoos should; and Trade Rat, whose sharp eye for a profit makes him heartily and thoroughly disliked by everyone. The twins meet them all, and others besides, and discover that each one has some trait in common with kindly, greedy, cruel, suffering, generous humanity. No specific injunctions are written into this story, yet the golden rules emerge clean and sharp.

For here is a fantasy that is supported by faith. Faith in goodness and character shines through these pages as brightly as Alexander's tail lights up the path for his young guests. *The Hoogles and Alexander* charts a new world of the imagination. Like the classic tales of other never-never-lands, this book makes a delightful, distinct, and lasting contribution to the literature of childhood. Like them, it is a book to be read and reread with affection by Hoogles, both young and old. Are you a Hoogle? Better read it and find out!

YOUR CHILD FROM 6 TO 12. Children's Bureau Publication Number 324. Single copies available to parents free of charge from the Children's Bureau, Federal Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.

THESE middle years when boys and girls are no longer babies but not yet adolescents have too often been

neglected in the literature of child development. Happily, therefore, this comprehensive booklet meets the long-felt need for a useful sequel to those other indispensable publications of the Children's Bureau, *Infant Care* and *Your Child from One to Six*.

What the normal youngster is like at each age between six and twelve is briefly stated in terms of his physical and intellectual growth, social progress, skills, and activities. Among the topics discussed are the role of the family, the meaning of play, how home and school can help each other, the cultivating of sensible attitudes about sex, how to keep the well child healthy and get the sick child well again, and ways to cope with habits of teasing, whining, quarreling, and nail biting.

Parents who seek to understand and guide their children of grade-school age will find *Your Child from 6 to 12* readable and highly practical.

AMERICAN SCHOOL BUILDINGS. Twenty-seventh Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators. Published by the Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street Northwest, Washington 6, D. C. 1949. \$4.00.

MODERN educators see the school building as far more than a shell within which the education process goes on willy-nilly; they see it as actively helping or hindering the teaching staff. Now that school enrollments are swollen and swelling in all sections of the country and the need for constructing new buildings or renovating old ones has become acute, the factors to be considered in any building program are of first importance.

It is appropriate that the organization of schoolmen best fitted to discuss the construction problems of America's schools should issue this report in yearbook form. If the report can be said to have a moral, it is that intelligent planning not only for present needs but for future educational trends is absolutely necessary to make sure that the final plant will be functionally effective and economically sound.

Definite, factual counsel is given on the roles of school board, architect, engineer, educational consultant, and other officials. How to fit the physical facilities to the curriculum, provide for safety at all times, build for efficiency yet have due regard for beauty, and exercise in all respects a just economy—these are some of the considerations the yearbook takes into account. The selection of materials and the problems of financing are handled realistically, and a check list of vital details that might easily be overlooked should save many an inexperienced board of education some painful and perhaps some expensive false steps.

In short, this book should prove a strong cornerstone for America's school construction program in the next ten to fifteen years.

STUDY COURSE OUTLINES

For study group leaders and P.T.A. program chairmen

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE PRESCHOOL CHILD

Directed by Ethel Kavin

- The Roots of Aggression. (See page 4 of this issue.)

About Our Study Course Article

FOR this last article in our 1948-49 study course we have selected one of the most important problems in psychology. The author, one of America's outstanding psychiatrists and a specialist in child guidance, presented a paper on this topic at the International Congress on Mental Health in London last summer. His article will help to clarify the misunderstandings and conflicts that arise from the contradictory meanings associated with the word *aggression*. One teacher will say, "I won't let these aggressive youngsters get away with things in my classroom!" Another will say, "You can't do much for un-aggressive children. The other boys and girls just walk all over them!"

The problem has assumed world importance. Obviously we cannot go into its larger aspects here, but we can study the roots of aggression and begin to understand how aggressive tendencies, wisely guided, can become constructive forces in life.

Points for Discussion

1. Begin preparing for discussion of this article by considering what the word *aggression* means to you. Do you think of a hostile, attacking person, or at least of one who thrusts himself unpleasantly into situations where he is not welcome? Or do you think of an aggressive person as one with lots of drive and energy, who succeeds in getting what he wants?

2. Let us grant that aggressiveness, the capacity to reach out and use the environment to satisfy essential needs, is an elemental characteristic of all living matter. Give a number of illustrations to show that aggressive behavior in its very nature has potentialities for good as well as evil.

3. Why is it so important that those who deal with children—parents especially—should know the positive value of aggression rather than stress only its destructive potentialities? Do you think most of us tend to repress all aggression in children because we think only of its negative meaning?

4. As Dr. Allen points out, the very fact that a child is alive means he is capable of positive or negative aggressive acts. Cite three examples of how parents or teachers may encourage constructive aggression in a child. Give three others showing control that prevents a child's destructive aggression.

5. Why is it unwise for parents to "become docile slaves to a child's demands"? Or "autocrats seeking docile obedience"?

6. Why is it inevitable that every child will to some extent resist our efforts to mold him? Give some examples of how we can allow a young child to be himself and follow his unique ways, while we still hold him to certain forms of behavior that are necessary to his own best development.

7. What is likely to happen to the personality and behavior

of a child whose parents regard any aggressive resistance to their control as "bad"?

8. Some frustration is, as Dr. Allen says, a necessary part of growing up. A child must learn early that he cannot have everything he wants when he demands it. Give several illustrations of situations in which a preschool child's demands should not be met. Cite several situations in which adults frequently thwart the desires of preschool children unnecessarily.

9. Whether the child's aggressive tendencies develop in good or bad directions depends chiefly on how parents handle his innate urges. Describe good and bad handling of such urges as a child's wanting to touch and finger everything in the world about him; grabbing toys from other children because he wants them for himself; pushing baby sister away from Mother's breast while Mother is nursing her; kicking Daddy when he tries to get him to bed.

10. Make a summary statement of the methods wise and mature parents will use to help their children become the kind of creative individuals Dr. Allen describes in his last paragraph.

Program Suggestions

IT WOULD of course be helpful if the services of a psychiatrist or a psychologist trained in child guidance could be available for this meeting. However, an experienced study group can have a very fruitful discussion of this profound psychological topic by using either the panel or symposium method, if participants make careful preparation and use the above outline.

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PSYCHOLOGY OF THE SCHOOL-AGE CHILD

Directed by Ralph H. Ojemann and Eva H. Grant

I. CHILDREN IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- Allowance for Growth. (See page 7 of this issue.)

Comment

WHEN you give your child an allowance, you are helping him forward—forward a long, long step on the difficult road to that hard-won goal, maturity. Responsibility and maturity are almost synonymous, and the way anybody handles money is an excellent test of either. We cannot expect perfection from a child, of course, but he needs a chance to make mistakes and to learn from them. How shall we give him this chance and see that he makes the most of it?

Pertinent Points for Discussion

1. Why is it so important for children to become acquainted with money by actually having some of it and seeing how it works?

2. Name several decisions involving money that a school-age child ought to be able to make on his own?

3. There was a time when giving children a certain sum of money at fixed intervals was looked upon as an indulgence, a

luxury that the child really did not deserve. Describe the change of attitude that has taken place, and discuss our present-day reasons for regarding the allowance as an educational device.

4. What are the factors that must be considered in determining how much is a fair allowance for the school-age child?

5. When a child is made responsible for his personal purchases, what educational experiences is he likely to have?

6. How would you explain to a child the usefulness of saving? Why should we not expect an elementary school child to save over a long period for some remote purchase? What are some of the things for which children are usually willing to sacrifice an immediate satisfaction in favor of a later, more important one?

7. Individual differences enter into money matters as they do into every other phase of life. That is why some children will naturally want to buy more or save more than will other children. However, some children tend to be spendthrifts or hoarders. How would you guide them toward a more balanced attitude?

8. List a few useful jobs that children can do at home and be paid for, in order to learn the relationship between money and human labor.

9. What is the effect upon a child when parents use the allowance as discipline or a bribe for getting higher marks?

10. List the values to be gained from a family council in which children are given a chance to discuss the family's financial standing, budget problems, and other financial matters.

11. When Mary brought up the question of taking violin lessons, her parents told her that if she could save enough from her allowance to buy a violin, they would pay for the weekly lessons. By skipping and saving, Mary was finally able to save up the needed amount. Unfortunately, just about that time her mother underwent an operation and the family found itself heavily in debt. Should Mary be expected to turn over her savings to help pay hospital and doctor bills?

12. How do you try to make your children understand that

money has other uses than self-gratification? That they do not always have to "get" something tangible for their money? How old should a child be before he can be expected to use his allowance for contributions to the Community Chest or the Red Cross?

Program Suggestions

A PANEL, a symposium, or any of the other forms of discussion described in *Study-Discussion Group Techniques for Parent Education Leaders* would be appropriate for this month's topic. One valuable panel member or resource person might well be a teacher of mathematics who knows about modern ways of helping young people to understand money. Allow plenty of time for members of the group to comment on the discussion and to contribute anecdotes and helpful hints, since the problem of training children to use money is one that most parents have had to work out with their own insight and ingenuity.

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II. ADOLESCENTS

• Will They Be Ready for Marriage? (See page 21 of this issue.)

Comment

STRANGE as it may seem, these teen-age boys and girls of ours are nearly grown up. It won't be long before they're ready for marriage. Not long enough, anyway, to permit slackness on our part about teaching them what they need to know of marriage, family life, and intelligent parenthood. The earlier and the more unobtrusively this teaching is begun, the better results we may hope to achieve.

Pertinent Points for Discussion

1. What skills and knowledge should the adequate homemaker possess? Why do attitudes and values contribute even more to successful marriage than do homemaking skills?
2. What bearing do a child's early years have on later happiness or unhappiness in marriage? How can a mother help her daughter to feel joy and pride in the fact that she will someday be a wife and mother? How can a father help his son to feel the same way about being a husband and father?
3. The clear-cut line between the sexes with regard to house-keeping and child-rearing tasks is slowly disappearing. How do you account for this change? Do you think it makes family life more satisfying? What other recent changes in our culture do you think contribute to better adjustment in marriage? What changes have the opposite effect?
4. Studies show that among the traits most highly correlated with happiness in marriage are superior happiness of parents, childhood happiness, firm but not harsh home discipline, infrequency and mildness of childhood punishment, parental frankness about sex, and love for both parents with no marked preference for either one. From your own reading and observation, list the traits most closely associated with unhappy marriages.
5. Analyze one or two current motion pictures in terms of their treatment of love and marriage. How does each contribute to the romantic concept many young people have about love and marriage? How can we give them a more realistic one?
6. What opportunity is there in your community for boys and girls to enjoy wholesome associations with each other? How can your P.T.A. increase these opportunities?
7. Do the schools in your community offer courses in education for marriage and family life? If so, what do these courses include? If such education is not available, what can an alert group of parents do to help make it part of the curriculum?

8. Discuss the readiness for marriage of these young people:
- Johnny, who has just passed his eighteenth birthday, seldom asks a girl for a date. Indeed he brags about mother's being his best girl and says he has more fun with her than with any girl he knows. In your opinion, what are Johnny's chances for making a successful marriage?

- Susan has just announced her engagement to a young man who is highly thought of in the community. The only person who isn't happy about the engagement is Susan's father. He has never felt that any young man was good enough for his daughter. Is this attitude unusual in a father? What clues does it give to his personality? What would you advise Susan to do?

Program Suggestions

CARE should be taken to hold this subject within well-defined limits. Marriage and family life is so broad and challenging a topic that it is easy to digress into questions which, though related to preparation for marriage, are nevertheless not directly pertinent. As resource persons, consider asking representatives from the fields of sociology, home economics, psychology, marriage counseling, or parent education. Perhaps someone in the community who teaches a college or high school course in marriage preparation could describe the content of that course. Then the group might discuss ways of extending education for marriage and family living downward into elementary school as well as upward into adult education.

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Motion Picture PREVIEWS

THE results of a survey poll carried on by members of the Allied States Association of Exhibitors were recently released to the press. The membership of this association comes largely from small neighborhood theaters in thirty-two states. The survey revealed the growing resentment of theater patrons toward sophistication and sex in films and toward the prevalence of films characterized by "sordidness and crime."

The exhibitors ask producers to "get back to family themes, animal and outdoor pictures, action and adventure, including westerns, musical comedies, and biographies." They prove their points by calling attention to the 1948 films that were most profitable in their respective areas: *The Fuller Brush Man*, *The Green Grass of Wyoming*, *My Wild Irish Rose*, *Easter Parade*, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, *Scudda Hoo! Scudda Hay!*, *The Wistful Widow of Wagon Gap*, *Road to Rio*, *The Bride Goes Wild*, *Sitting Pretty*, *Green Dolphin Street*, and *A Southern Yankee*.

These exhibitors wish to hold their present audiences as well as to bring back former patrons who have registered their dislike for brutality and crime by staying away from the theaters. If producers will heed this sincere expression of facts and needs, they will meet with the unqualified approval of parent-teacher members.

It is to be hoped that in getting back to "making films the whole family can enjoy," producers will return to the type of western movies that children have always delighted in. These followed a simple story pattern and drew their characters in such a way that children could easily identify the good and bad men. Their sympathy was always with the good man and against the bad man. They gave vent to their emotions by applauding the good and hissing or booing the bad—as anyone who has sat with a junior matinee audience very well knows!

Within the past two years producers have injected the gangster and the criminal, with all their brutality, into western films. Moreover, characters are no longer good men and bad men. They are often so confused that even an adult finds it difficult to identify the hero. Sometimes the bad man emerges as the hero in the end.

A film reviewed on the next page, *I Shot Jesse James*, purports to be based on the lives of Jesse James and his gang. Jesse is portrayed as a Robin Hood so brave and clever that the officers of the law could never get him, and he was shot in the back by a man he had befriended. Certainly if the plot were taken from history and told the actual truth, Jesse James should have been depicted as he really was, a man whom everyone despised and feared.

If exhibitors who like to put western films on their junior matinee programs will raise their voices in protest against "crime westerns" and refuse to use them, producers might give more careful thought to the drawing of characters in their scripts.

—RUTH B. HEDGES

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF RUTH B. HEDGES,
MOTION PICTURE CHAIRMAN OF THE CALIFORNIA
CONGRESS, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF HYPATIA GORDON
PARVIS, REPORT CHAIRMAN

JUNIOR MATINEE (From 8 to 14 years)

Down to the Sea in Ships—20th Century-Fox. Direction, Henry Hathaway. This is an inspirational and highly dramatic tale of whale fishing in the late 1800's. More specifically, it is a tale of the integrity and courage shown by an old sea captain, master of the whaling vessel *Pride*, and his young grandson. It backs the traditions of father-to-son training, emphasizing wisdom and staunchness of spirit. The acting of the all-male cast is excellent, and several of the characterizations are outstanding. The catching of a whale and an encounter with an iceberg are high points of suspense. Cast: Richard Widmark, Lionel Barrymore, Dean Stockwell, Cecil Kellaway.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Excellent	Excellent	Yes

The Green Promise—RKO-Radio. Direction, William Russell. A warm, human-interest story of life on a newly acquired farm as lived by a motherless family of four children and their loving but strong-willed father, who seems to dominate them completely. The county agricultural agent helps them to realize and face their individual responsibilities, both to themselves and to their community, through acquainting them with the working of the 4-H clubs. He also brings romance into the life of the older sister. The acting of the excellently chosen cast is convincing, and production values are good in all departments. Natalie Wood and her two black Karakul lambs are a bright spot in the picture. Cast: Marguerite Chapman, Walter Brennan, Robert Paige, Natalie Wood.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Good	Good	Good

Life of Riley—Universal. Direction, Irving Brecher. This well-cast comedy, based upon the radio program of the same name, has great human appeal although the story is unimportant. William Bendix as Riley endears himself to everyone and adds good, clean humor to the picture. Home and family ties are the important factors in the plot, and they are satisfactorily developed. Situations and dialogue are wholesome and amusing. Cast: William Bendix, Rosemary DeCamp, Meg Randall, Lanny Rees.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Amusing	Yes	Yes

Little Women—MGM. Direction, Mervyn LeRoy. The universally beloved story by Louisa May Alcott is again brought to the screen. Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy come to life in a picture of such loveliness, freshness, and charm as to be at once a tribute to the author and a delight to all who see it. Technicolor brings added beauty to the quaint costumes and homey settings. The intimate scenes of the March family, their joys, sorrows, and growing-up experiences are simply and sincerely presented. June Allyson as imaginative, warmhearted, tomboyish Jo; Margaret O'Brien as shy, gentle, music-loving Beth; Elizabeth Taylor as ambitious but loyal Amy; and Janet Leigh as sweet, home-loving Meg—all give completely satisfying characterizations. The production is excellent, the direction expert, and the plot follows the book satisfactorily. Cast: Besides those mentioned, Peter Lawford, Mary Astor, Lucile Watson, Sir C. Aubrey Smith, Elizabeth Patterson.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

FAMILY

(Suitable for children if accompanied by adults)

Canadian Pacific—20th Century-Fox. Direction, Edwin L. Marin. This story of the building of the Canadian Pacific Railroad is well presented. It has a good cast and was efficiently directed. Action centers around the laying of track through the Rocky Mountains, where the construction units meet violent opposition from the trappers and the Indians, who have been incited to battle by a wealthy fur trader and thus delay the completion of the road. The magnificent mountain scenery, photographed in the subdued tones of Cinecolor, supplies a beautiful background. Much gunplay and fierce Indian attacks make the picture too tense for the very young. Cast: Randolph Scott, Jane Wyatt, J. Carroll Naish, Victor Jory.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Good	Good	Good but tense

A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court—Paramount. Direction, Tay Garnett. A modernized version of Mark Twain's novel becomes an entertaining musical comedy in this expertly produced and directed picture. Technicolor enhances the story and lends enchantment to the scenery and the pageantry of court life. Bing Crosby's nonchalant acting and tuneless crooning set the tempo and the mood. Cast: Bing Crosby, Rhonda Fleming, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, William Bendix.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Good	Good	If interested

Miranda—Rank-Eagle-Lion. Direction, Ken Annakin. A light, sophisticated comedy with a fantastic plot, attractive English settings, and the London Symphony Orchestra. The dialogue is crisp and humorous, the direction and story continuity are good, and many laugh-provoking incidents help to sustain the weak but whimsical plot. A young doctor on a fishing trip off the Cornwall coast is held captive by a mermaid until he agrees to take her home with him to his London apartment. There, posing as a beautiful invalid, she proves a threat not only to his marriage but also to two other romances. Cast: Glynis Johns, Gogie Withers, Griffith Jones, John McCallum.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Amusing	Amusing	Mature

Portrait of Jenny—Selznick-SRO. Direction, William Dieterle. The screen gives reality to this beautiful and romantic fantasy. The veiled photography lends it a mystic quality, and the snow scenes in the park have a magical, Christmas-card effect. The direction is outstanding, and the acting excellent. The hurricane sequence is magnificently filmed. Debussy's music forms a fitting accompaniment to the story. Although the plot is thin, technically the film is excellent. Cast: Jennifer Jones, Joseph Cotten, Ethel Barrymore, Cecil Kellaway, Lillian Gish.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Excellent	Good	Of doubtful interest

ADULT

The Bribe—MGM. Direction, Robert Z. Leonard. A storm-lashed island off the coast of Central America is the setting for this tense drama of murder and intrigue. The story, shown in flashback, is narrated by the principal character. It tells of the struggles of a federal agent with his conscience when he is offered a bribe to abandon his investigations on the island. He is strongly tempted to yield because he has fallen in love with one of the suspects. The heat of the tropics and the crude huts of the island are realistically depicted. The cast gives a convincing performance, yet the plot is weak—at times unethical—and the action gets out of hand in the final scenes. Cast: Robert Taylor, Ava Gardner, Charles Laughton, Vincent Price.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Entertaining	No	No

Brothers in The Saddle—RKO. Direction, Lesley Selander. Viewed from any angle this picture is poor. The plot is trite and tiresome, and even the violent slugging matches get monotonous. Though it tries to show that good eventually triumphs over evil, the film is ethically objectionable because the hero takes the law into his own hands. Cast: Tim Holt, Richard Martin, Steve Brodie, Virginia Cox.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Waste of time	No	No

I Shot Jesse James—Screen Guild. Direction Lippert-Screen Guild. A mediocre melodrama presenting the time-worn story of Jesse James, this time from the standpoint of his assassin, Bob Ford. Ford, himself a bandit, wins amnesty and a reward for shooting his friend in the back and turning the body over to

the authorities. The action is so unconvincing at times as to become ludicrous. The picture lacks both ethical and entertainment values and adds nothing of interest to an oft-told tale. Cast: Preston Foster, Barbara Britton, John Ireland.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Ludicrous	No	No

The Lucky Stiff—United Artists. Direction, Lewis R. Foster. A farcical murder mystery highlighted by bits of clever comedy that evoke spontaneous laughter. In spite of a good cast and some unusually good characterizations, the picture is only average in its appeal, owing perhaps to poor story continuity. The plot is based on the protection racket, and situations and action are too far-fetched to be taken seriously. Cast: Dorothy Lamour, Brian Donlevy, Claire Trevor, Irene Hervey.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Amusing	Not recommended	No

The Red Pony—Republic. Direction, Lewis Milestone. Adapted by John Steinbeck from his book of the same name, this Technicolor picture has moments of sheer beauty, which contrast with an episode of horror. A boy who fails to find understanding in his parents turns to the hired man for help and comfort. The intimate surroundings of the farm, as shown in the beginning, seem to promise a delightful family film. However, this illusion is completely shattered by a dreadful, brutal sequence involving a fight between a boy and a flock of vultures over the body of a dead pony. Seldom before has a scene been so realistically screened. The film lags, then gathers momentum, only to lag again. Cast: Myrna Loy, Robert Mitchum, Louis Calhern, Shepperd Strudwick.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Fair	No	No

Streets of Laredo—Paramount. Direction, Leslie Fenton. Disguised as a western, this film actually is a melodrama about the gangsters' protection racket. Long-range Technicolor shots of plains, cloud formations, and the desert at sunset are lovely, but the story is weak and involved. Although there is plenty of action, much of it is violent and brutal. Summed up, here is just another crime-does-not-pay picture where the bad men get killed and the hero, who started out as a bandit, is reformed. Cast: William Holden, William Bendix, Macdonald Carey, Mona Freeman.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Fair	No	No

A Woman's Secret—RKO. Direction, Nicholas Ray. An absurd story, told in flashback, showing the events that led up to a shooting. Two women are involved—a singer who has lost her voice and her protégée, through whom she tries to recapture her lost career. When the younger girl is shot, her sponsor takes the blame and refuses to defend herself in court, though her motive for assuming the guilt and being willing to accept the death penalty is never made clear. However, she is freed through the efforts of the man whom both women love. Production and acting are good, but the ethical values are poor. Cast: Maureen O'Hara, Melvyn Douglas, Gloria Grahame, Bill Williams.

Adults	14-18	8-14
Fair	No	No



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The camera has caught these children at a tense moment as they raptly watch a motion picture.

Looking into Legislation

ON February 25 a new housing bill was introduced in the Senate. It is the result of the report of the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency on S.138 and other housing measures (see March issue). This bill, S.1070, has bipartisan support, with eleven senators from each party. The Democrats are Senators Ellender (Louisiana), Maybank (South Carolina), Wagner (New York), Sparkman (Alabama), Myers (Pennsylvania), Hill (Alabama), Pepper (Florida), Long (Louisiana), Taylor (Idaho), Douglas (Illinois), and Frear (Delaware). The Republicans are Senators Flanders (Vermont), Tobey (New Hampshire), Taft (Ohio), Aiken (Vermont), Morse (Oregon), Lodge (Massachusetts), Young (North Dakota), Baldwin (Connecticut), Ives (New York), Thye (Minnesota), and Smith (Maine).

Title I, "Slum Clearance and Community Development and Redevelopment," authorizes temporary loans for public buildings on open land projects. It exempts taxation on interest of local bonds issued for redemption purposes. Although the President may accelerate the program, he is first required to consult with the Council of Economic Advisers. There is no prohibition against the purchase of land before a certain date, as is contained in S.138, but the bill adds a provision that not more than 10 per cent of the funds may be expended in any one state. It reverses the demolition process from that given in S.138 by permitting demolition to take place but specifying that it must be stopped before July 1, 1951, if the local governing body steps in on the grounds that the demolition would work a hardship.

Title II, "Public Low-rent Housing," adds an authorization to make preliminary loans for surveys and planning. The veterans' preference provisions are changed to put displaced veterans first, then displaced nonveterans, then nondisplaced veterans. The size of the program has been reduced to \$308,000,000 annually, with a total of 810,000 authorized units over a six-year period. It contains a specific allocation for rural nonfarm housing. States and state agencies, if otherwise eligible, may enter into contracts for financial assistance with the public housing agency.

Title III, "Research," enlarges the scope of the bill by permitting the administrator to make contracts for technical research, with the results dedicated to the public.

Title IV, "Farm Housing," extends financial assistance for farm buildings as well as farmhouses. Veterans' preferences are extended to families of deceased servicemen.

Title V, "Miscellaneous," authorizes the appointment of a deputy housing and home finance administrator; conversion of state and veterans' housing programs (if otherwise eligible) to federally aided programs; and a regular decennial census of housing.

Undoubtedly the number of housing units, the cost per room of unit housing, and some of the provisions with respect to rural housing will be much debated.

A NUMBER of bills have been introduced into both houses of Congress for the purpose of correcting the limitations of the Displaced Persons Act of 1948 (see the November 1948 issue). The most complete of these was introduced into the Senate by Senators McGrath of Rhode Island and Neely of West Virginia and into the House by Representative Celler of New York. These bills (S.311 and H.R.1344) provide for:

1. Increasing the number of persons to be admitted from 205,000 in two years to 400,000 in four years.
2. Admitting displaced persons on a nonquota basis instead of mortgaging future quotas.
3. Changing the cut-off date from December 22, 1945, to April 21, 1947, and giving power to the Secretary of State to admit up to 15,000 DP's who fled into occupied areas after April 21, 1947, because of persecution or fear thereof.
4. Eliminating the 30 per cent preference for agriculturists and giving preference without percentages to farmers, household help, construction workers, clothing and garment workers, and those persons with educational, professional, scientific, or technological skills needed in various sections of the U.S.
5. Eliminating the 40 per cent preference for persons from annexed territories and specifically prohibiting discrimination for or against any DP because of nationality, religion, or race.
6. Eliminating the requirement that a DP must be assured a

Contributors

FREDERICK H. ALLEN, M.D., author of *Psychotherapy with Children* and distinguished director of the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, is also on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. His eminence in the field of child psychiatry was given world-wide recognition last year when he was asked to speak at the historic International Congress on Mental Health in London. He contributed a pivotal paper on aggression.

Like Gaul, AMY BISHOP CHAPIN's professional life is divided in three parts. She is assistant professor of speech at Western Reserve University; assistant chief of the hearing and speech therapy division of the Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center; and consultant to the Cleveland Heights Board of Education. Mrs. Chapin has collaborated on parent education pamphlets and published many superior articles about children's speech.

RONALD C. DOLL spent three years doing the research on which his article is based. Since both his parents were teachers, it was only natural that he should choose the field of teaching and administration, in which he has been engaged for twelve years. Mr. Doll is supervisor of guidance in the public schools of West Orange, New Jersey, and part-time instructor at Hunter College.

JOSEPHINE HAYFORD, the wife of a professor at Northwestern University, first learned of Arnold Gesell's Child Development Clinic when her husband was a graduate student at Yale. She taught in various schools before the advent of the three youngsters whose early lives she here records. Mrs. Hayford is a parent-teacher member, an accomplished cook, and a participant in many civic affairs.

EMILY B. H. MUDD has been the able counselor and executive director of the Philadelphia Marriage Council since 1932. She teaches at two universities and directs marriage courses at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore colleges. She is vice-president both of the National Council on Family Relations and of the American Association of Marriage Counselors. Her husband is a physician, and the oldest of their four children has just been married.

RALPH H. OJEMANN, associate professor in the Iowa University Child Welfare Research Station, is chairman of the National Congress Committee on Parent Education and the nominee for the office of national treasurer. In great demand as speaker, consultant, and writer, Dr. Ojemann is a noted authority on the influence of culture and community upon the school-age child.

BONARO W. OVERSTREET and her husband are still conducting their far-famed adult education courses in Detroit and Grand Rapids, Michigan. Meanwhile their new book, *All Children Are Our Children: A Study of the P.T.A. Idea*, is now on the presses and will be released next month. Watch for further news.

This month's "P.T.A. Frontier" was prepared by Mrs. Marian H. Schneider, Newark Welfare Council; Mrs. Benjamin S. Leon, Magazine chairman, New Jersey Congress; and Mrs. Horace J. Brogley, president, New Jersey Congress.

house and job in the U.S. (Instead, a sponsor must guarantee to the Displaced Persons Commission that the DP will not become a public charge.)

7. Retaining preference for 2,000 Czechs who fled Communist seizure of their country and also for 3,000 orphans.

8. Adding a new screening provision that bars any DP who advocated or assisted in the persecution of any people or participated in any movement hostile to our form of government.

9. Transferring the so-called *Volksdeutsche* provision to the regular Immigration Act of 1924.

10. Loaning of \$5,000,000 from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to the Displaced Persons Commission, to be loaned in turn to voluntary agencies for inland transportation of DP's in the United States.

—EDNA P. COOK

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Convention Theme:

Home, School, and the Child

March Forward



**FEATURES
of the 1949
Convention Program
May 16, 17, 18
St. Louis, Missouri**

Addresses by Prominent Speakers

Section Meetings

Congress Clinics

Panel Discussions

Film Festival

Election of Officers

Life Membership Luncheon

Banquet

pastor of the Marble Collegiate Church in New York City; author of *A Guide to Confident Living*; **Charles W. Ferguson**, senior editor of the *Reader's Digest*; and **Emily Kimbrough**, lecturer and author of *It Gives Me Great Pleasure*.

One of the features of the program will be a panel discussion in which the newly appointed parent education consultants of the National Congress will participate.

The convention has been planned so that there will be an opportunity for general discussion and for informal get-togethers.

MAYTIME IS MEETING TIME ON THE MISSISSIPPI

THE THEME of the 1949 convention—"Home, School, and the Child March Forward"—reaffirms the constancy of purpose and the faith in accomplishment that have characterized the National Congress of Parents and Teachers since its founding in 1897.

Once again we come together to work and plan for the future. The list of speakers this year is an impressive one; it includes **Mabel Studebaker**, president of the National Education Association; **W. P. Percival**, president of the Canadian Federation of Home and School; **Eric Johnston**, president of the Motion Picture Association of America and chairman of the 1948 National Conference on Family Life; **Sidonie M. Gruenberg**, director of the Child Study Association of America; **Dr. Norman Vincent Peale**,

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